

Empirical coherences between Types of Job Satisfaction and demographical issues

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1. Introduction

Work satisfaction is one of the most frequently studied concepts in work and organizational psychology (Büssing 1999) because a lot of interesting coherences (e.g. performance, absenteeism, quality of work) are expected. However, there are very few models to explain this concept. This results in a number of problems for the science (e.g. the loose coupling between theory and measurement, unmanageable number of definitions, unclear construct validity), as well as, for its operational implementation.

It is important to use model-based theories and standardized questionnaires to ensure the quality and transferability of test results.

2. Methodology

The results of this article are based on the Zurich Model Revisited (ZMR), which is a further development of Bruggemann's Zurich Model of Job Satisfaction. Bruggemann et al. (1975) suggested a dynamic model to describe multiple forms of work satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The closer evaluation of the dynamic processes of the development of job satisfaction gives the opportunity to identify work processes that cause e.g. resignation. One could not find this if one only collected facets of job satisfaction (e.g. satisfaction with the disciplinarian, with the colleagues, with the opportunities for development), though these facets are also included in this dynamic process of the development of job satisfaction. ZMR (Ferreira 2009) describes the process of developing job satisfaction types with four major variables. The first major variable shows the comparison between the actual work situation and the expectations. The second major variable describes the perceived control. In the third major variable, the level of aspiration is contemplated. The last major variable reflects on problem solving attempts.

To collect the data the questionnaire FEAT (Fragebogen zur Erhebung von Arbeitszufriedenheitstypen = Questionnaire to Assess Types of Job Satisfaction) was used. The unique nature of this questionnaire is the possibility to measure each major variable in a single way. Doing this enables the combination of the major variables in a variable way and, thus, permits the description of new, never detected types of job satisfaction. Each major variable could have different characteristics and this fact was not sufficiently considered in the previous research.

3. Results

In the meantime more than 20 industrial samples could be selected with more than 2.000 persons. The following results are only a little selection of significant results which are based on these samples.

Distinction between the sexes

Women have higher expectations on their work situation and their workplace than men and they become disappointed about them more often. There are plenty of explanations for this result, for example less qualification opportunities for women or lower wages.

Age differences

People between 20 and 40 years have significantly more often a negative discrepant comparison between the actual work situation and the expectations. It seems that the expectations hinge on experience and knowledge.

In addition we could prove that only older people in our samples have had a positive discrepant comparison between the actual work situation and their expectations. They feel that they get more at their workplace than they expected.

School leaving certificate

People with a congruent comparison between the actual work situation and expectations have significantly more often a lower school leaving certificate than persons with a negative discrepant comparison. They don't expect as much as persons with a higher school leaving certificate.

Teamwork with colleagues

People who enhance their aspiration level at work value the cooperation with their colleagues significantly better than others. That is reasonable because to reach their new goals they need their colleagues. Also these people have more fun and pleasure at work.

4. Conclusion

Empirically identified significant differences and correlations are the basics for further psychological interpretations of the confirmed job satisfaction types. It seems as every job satisfaction type has its individual profile with very specific preferences, apprehensions, traits and attitudes. To have a closer look at these profiles will help to explain the behavior and the sensations of working people.

Also the results allow conclusions to be drawn regarding different demographical issues and provide a closer look at the coherences between job satisfaction and aspects such as gender, culture, age or education.

5. References

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