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Dispositional Effects on Job Stressors and Job Satisfaction: The Role of Core Evaluations

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Abstract

Core self-evaluations (CSE) is a broad, integrative trait indicated by self-esteem, locus of control, generalized self-efficacy, and (low) neuroticism (high emotional stability). The aim of this study was to investigate the role of core self evaluations and its traits in the job stressors and job satisfaction. Two hundred and twenty eight (45 males, 183 females) of Islamic Azad University employees completed Measures of Job Stressors which consisted of the Interpersonal Conflict at Work Scale, the Organizational Constraints Scale, and Quantitative Workload Inventory, Overall Job Satisfaction, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES), Eysenck Personality Inventory Neuroticism Scale, Internality, Powerful Others and Chance Scale (IPC), as well as Core Self-Evaluation Scale (CSEs). Findings revealed the negative correlation of self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy and core self-evaluations with interpersonal conflict at work, organizational constraints, and job satisfaction. Neuroticism had also a positive correlation with them. Furthermore, regression analysis of the data demonstrated that self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, neuroticism, and core self-evaluations significantly predicted interpersonal conflict, organizational constraints, and job satisfaction. Therefore, based on the results it could be concluded that core self evaluation and four traits influence the job satisfaction and job stressors with the exception of quantitative workload.

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1. Introduction

Judge, Locke & Durham (1997) introduced the core self-evaluation concept in an effort to provide a useful predictor of job satisfaction and other applied criteria. Core self-evaluations are fundamental, bottom-line

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evaluations that people make of themselves. Like self-esteem, CSE is an appraisal of one's self-worth. However, CSE is broader than self-esteem in that it also reflects beliefs in one's capabilities (to control one's life) and one's competence (to perform, cope, persevere, and succeed) and a general sense that life will turn out well for oneself. CSE is viewed as a broad latent concept, indicated by at least four traits: self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and (low) neuroticism (Judge, 2009).

Self-esteem is "the approval of oneself and the degree to which one sees oneself as capable, significant, and worthy" (Coopersmith, 1967). In theory, it seems likely that a person who lacks self-approval and views himself or herself in a negative way will also be dissatisfied with his or her job. Research suggests that self-esteem may moderate the stress-illness relationship and job satisfaction. It seems that self-esteem may be a stable pattern of influence on a person's appraisal of threats and also in patterns of autonomic arousal (i.e., heartbeat and respiration). Individuals with high self-esteem may, thus, have a higher threshold for experiencing job stress compared to their low self-esteem counterparts (Brunborg, 2008).

Generalized self-efficacy is an appraisal of how well one can handle life's challenges (Judge, 2009). Some studies have investigated self-efficacy in relation to job stress. Evidence indicates that high self-efficacy individuals will cope better with high job control, while low self-efficacy individuals will feel that high job control exacerbates job stress in demanding jobs (Brunborg, 2008).

Neuroticism is the tendency to have a negativistic outlook and to focus on negative aspects of the self (Bipp, 2010; Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012a, 2012b; Judge, Hulin & Dalaal, 2009; Judge, Klinger & Simon, 2010; Judge, Van Vianen & De Pater, 2004; Stumpp, Ute.Hu'lsheger, Muck & Maier, 2009). Over the last decade, several studies have investigated the influence of individual dispositions on two important indicators of intrinsic career success — employee job satisfaction (e.g., Heller, Ferris, Brown & Watson, 2009; Judge, Heller & Klinger, 2008; Sutin, Costa, Miech & Eaton, 2009) and career satisfaction (e.g., Bowling, Beehr & Lepisto 2006; Lounsbury, Steel, Gibson & Drost, 2008). Whereas job satisfaction is associated with one's current work, career satisfaction refers to accumulated experiences of a person in one's occupation or profession (Erdogan & Bauer, 2005). Accordingly, job satisfaction is treated as a constituent of career satisfaction (Lounsbury, Gibson, Steel, Sundstrom & Loveland, 2004).

So finally, locus of control is concerned with beliefs about the causes of events in one's life—locus is internal when individuals see outcomes as being contingent on their own behavior. This term was introduced by Rotter who divided between internal and external locus of control (Rotter, 1966). Internal locus of control is defined as an individual believing that he or she can control his or her own environment. External locus of control, on the other hand, describes an individual viewing his or her life as controlled by external forces (other people and events). According to Kahn, and Byosiere (1992), locus of control should be included in job stress research, since individuals with internal locus of control are more likely to cope actively with job stress and show greater levels of health and well-being in comparison to individuals with external locus of control.

In considering the relationships among these traits, it is worth noting that self-esteem, locus of control, and neuroticism (also known as emotional stability or emotional adjustment) are the most widely studied personality concepts in psychology—cumulatively, the traits have been the subject of more than 50,000 studies (Bono & Judge, 2003; Judge et al., 2009).

Individuals with positive core self evaluations appraise themselves in a consistently positive manner across situations; such individuals see themselves as capable, worthy, and in control of their lives. Research has consistently shown that the four core traits are substantially interrelated. For example, in the meta-analysis of Judge, Erez, Bono & Thoresen (2002), the average correlation among the traits was .64, which is as high as the correlations among alternative measures of the Big Five traits. Moreover, factor analyses—using both exploratory and confirmatory methods—have consistently shown that the four core traits load on a common factor (Erez & Judge, 2001; Judge, Erez & Bono, 1998b). Moreover, in predicting various criteria, it appears that the individual core traits show similar correlations with many criteria, including job satisfaction and job performance (Judge & Bono, 2001; Bono & Judge, 2003). The core self-evaluations typology was the only typology that was significantly related to job satisfaction (Judge et al., 2008).

More recently, high scores on CSE have been linked to reduced stress and burnout. Individuals with higher CSE may also experience less strain following exposure to stressors. CSE would act as a moderator: High CSE should reduce (i.e., make less positive) the relationship between stressors and strain, whereas low CSE should increase (i.e.,

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