

A MEMBERSHIP FOR QUALITY OF LIFE? THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF JOB SATISFACTION BETWEEN WORK ALIENATION AND LIFE SATISFACTION IN UNIONIZED AND NON-UNIONIZED WORKERS

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ABSTRACT

People spend a large part of their awake time at work, which can have a huge impact on their life satisfaction. Scholars have found that job satisfaction influences life satisfaction, but the role of work alienation is little studied. While work alienation reportedly diminishes life satisfaction, just how job satisfaction relates with these two constructs has not yet been clarified. Currently, the role of labor union membership is an underestimated aspect of this relationship. Although the relationship between union membership and job satisfaction has been variously studied, its relationship with other variables (e.g., work alienation and life satisfaction) remains less investigated. To fill this gap, the authors examined the influence of work alienation on job and life satisfaction in relation to belonging or not to a public administration workers' union. Self-report questionnaire responses (N=479) indicated a negative relationship between work alienation and job satisfaction and a

negative influence on overall quality of life. The relationship between work alienation and life satisfaction, however, was moderated by union membership. Union memberships mitigated the negative relationship between work alienation and life satisfaction and may be considered a protective factor for workers' quality of life.

key words:

work alienation,
life satisfaction,
job satisfaction,
union membership,
structural equation model

klíčová slova:

pracovní odcizení,
životní spokojenost,
pracovní spokojenost,
členství v odborech,
strukturní model

INTRODUCTION

Life satisfaction can be viewed as a comprehensive appraisal of one's life conditions that provides a personal account of happiness and well-being. Although these terms are not synonymous, life satisfaction is a key indicator of a person's well-being (Diener et al., 1985; Erdogan et al., 2012; Linley et al., 2009). High life satisfaction is associated with positive intrapersonal, interpersonal, and physical and mental health outcomes (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005), whereas low life satisfaction predicts negative outcomes, including health problems (Erdogan et al., 2012; Frisch, 2000).

There is an extensive psychological literature on the antecedents of life satisfaction. Most studies have focused on personality traits and assume a dispositional explanation for differences in personality variables as major factors in predicting life satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) (Diener et al., 2003; Steel et al., 2008). However, researchers have

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pointed out that life satisfaction depends on satisfaction in various concrete domains of life (Heller et al., 2004; Pavot & Diener, 2008), which highlights the importance of situational and environmental factors as variables that influence life satisfaction.

Studies on the relationship between work sphere and life satisfaction (e.g., Demerouti et al., 2000; Erdogan et al., 2012; Loewe et al., 2014) have highlighted the importance of life satisfaction based on evidence of its predictive power of organizational parameters, such as absenteeism (Murphy et al., 2006), turnover (De Cuyper et al., 2009; Demiral, 2018; Erdogan et al., 2012; von Bonsdorff et al., 2010), early retirement intentions (Von Bonsdorff et al., 2010), decreased job performance (Duckworth et al., 2009; Erdogan et al., 2012; Greguras & Diefendorff, 2010), and employee burn-out (Haar & Roche, 2010).

A better understanding of the interplay between the work domain and life satisfaction may be useful in interpreting individual behaviors and organizational well-being (e.g., performance, absenteeism, turnover). Research on life satisfaction in relation to work-related variables has primarily focused on job satisfaction (Erdogan et al., 2012; Martínez-Martí & Ruch, 2017) and less frequently examined the relationship with the construct of work alienation (Jiang et al., 2019; Seeman, 1959). Some scholars (Flavin et al., 2010; Flavin & Shufeldt, 2016) have highlighted the importance of unions in relation to the work and political spheres in influencing workers' quality of life. Unions are an important political variable, and union members are known to have higher life satisfaction than non-union workers, underscoring the impact of union membership on workers' quality of life (Flavin et al., 2010; Flavin & Shufeldt, 2016). Yet, little attention has been paid to the impact of union membership on workers' quality of life.

Life satisfaction, job satisfaction, and work alienation

Life satisfaction is often considered as deriving from satisfaction with different domains of life, assuming that the impact of environmental conditions is crucial for an individual's well-being (Erdogan et al., 2012; Heller et al., 2004; Pavot & Diener, 2008). Because work takes up a large portion of one's lifetime and work activity is a central aspect of many people's lives, research (Demerouti et al., 2000; Erdogan et al., 2012; Newman et al., 2015) has examined the impact of the work sphere on life satisfaction. A key variable is job satisfaction, which is conceptualised as a positive emotional state resulting from the evaluation of experiences related to work (de Beer et al., 2016; Locke, 1976; Zhu, 2013).

Three theoretical models have been developed to clarify the relationship between job satisfaction and life satisfaction (Loscocco & Rochelle, 1991). The spillover hypothesis assumes that positive experiences in the work domain positively affect the individual's non-work domain, implying a positive link between job and life satisfaction. The compensation hypothesis assumes that individuals who are dissatisfied at work are more likely to seek fulfilment in their lives outside of work; according to this hypothesis, a negative relationship between job satisfaction and life satisfaction is expected. The segmentation hypothesis states that people are able to separate their work and non-work lives, so that job satisfaction and life satisfaction are independent variables.

It has been argued (Judge & Watanabe, 1993; Schmitt & Bedeian, 1982) that the causal relationship between the two variables is inverse if it is assumed that life satisfaction can influence job satisfaction (Erdogan et al., 2012). The researchers explained this hypothesis in terms of a dispositional effect, according to which the positive affect associated with life satisfaction influences a positive interpretation of work conditions, which in turn leads to greater job satisfaction (Bower, 1981). However, the main evidence for this perspective goes back to older studies (Judge & Hulin,

1993), while more recent research treats job satisfaction mainly as a predictor of life satisfaction (Erdogan et al., 2012; Kohan & O'Connor, 2002; Newman et al., 2015), with the positive relationship between job satisfaction and life satisfaction (Iverson & Maguire, 2000; Kohan & O'Connor, 2002) supporting the spillover hypothesis.

There is some evidence (Carlson & Kacmar, 2000; Erdogan et al., 2012; Newman et al., 2015; Simon et al., 2010) of the impact of job satisfaction on life satisfaction, with the former being a mediator of the impact of other job-related predictors. Among the various antecedents of job satisfaction considered in these mediation models are role stressors and other sources of job-related tension. However, as far as we are aware, no study to date has included the construct of work alienation.

Seeman (1959) provided a systematic definition of alienation that focuses on deprivation situations such as powerlessness (when people feel they have no control over decision-making processes), meaninglessness (when people perceive work as unimportant or not worthwhile), normlessness (situations in which traditional norms do not apply), self-alienation (when people find themselves in unpaid employment), and isolation (when workers feel an unmet need to belong). These conditions lead people to perceive an alienation or disconnection from their work and a loss of "control over the product and process of one's labor, and therefore, the capacity to express oneself at work" (Suárez-Mendoza & Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara, 2007, p. 57). It can cause employees to disengage from their job role (Hirschfeld & Field, 2000; Nair & Vohra, 2009), behave unsafely (Jiang et al., 2019), and engage in counterproductive work behaviors (Li & Chen, 2018). One would expect employees who feel disengaged from their work to have lower job satisfaction and a negative relationship between work alienation and job satisfaction (Chiaburu et al., 2014; Fedi et al., 2016; Hirschfeld et al., 2000; Muttar et al., 2019).

Similarly, other studies have demonstrated the negative effects of the construct of work disengagement on life satisfaction (Demerouti et al., 2000; Rastogi et al., 2018). Disengagement is related to work alienation and can be defined as "distancing oneself from one's work and negative attitudes toward the work object, work content, or one's work in general" (Demerouti et al., 2000, p. 455). It is the result of a lack of resources such as rewards and social recognition at work (Demerouti et al., 2000). If work alienation has a negative impact on life satisfaction (e.g., Demerouti et al., 2000; Körner et al., 2012; Rastogi et al., 2018), we can assume that work alienation has a similar impact on life satisfaction. To our knowledge, no study has yet examined the relationship between work alienation and job satisfaction in terms of spillover effects of work alienation on the non-work domain and on life satisfaction. Consistent with the spillover model (Loscosso & Rochelle, 1991), it may be plausible to hypothesize that the negative working conditions experienced by alienated workers affect their non-work domains and have a negative impact on their life satisfaction.

Work alienation can have a direct impact on life satisfaction (Deveci Şirin & Şirin, 2015). It has been suggested (Erdogan et al., 2012; Newman et al., 2015) that its effect may be mediated by job satisfaction. Previous research has shown a strong relationship between work alienation and job satisfaction (Chiaburu et al., 2014; Fedi et al., 2016; Hirschfeld et al., 2000) and a spillover effect of job satisfaction to the non-work domain (Erdogan et al., 2012; Iverson & Maguire, 2000; Kohan & O'Connor, 2002; Newman et al., 2015). We can assume that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between work alienation and life satisfaction. To our knowledge, the role of job satisfaction in mediating the effects of work alienation on life satisfaction has not been empirically examined in any study. Considering the above, we can formulate the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1 - Work alienation is negatively related to job satisfaction (Chiaburu et al., 2014; Fedi et al., 2016; Hirschfeld et al., 2000) and life satisfaction (Loscocco & Rochelle, 1991)

Hypothesis 2 - Job satisfaction is positively related to life satisfaction (Iverson & Maguire, 2000; Kohan & O'Connor, 2002)

Hypothesis 3 - Job satisfaction plays a mediating role in the relationship between work alienation and life satisfaction (Erdogan et al., 2012; Newman et al., 2015). High levels of alienation are associated with low levels of job and life satisfaction.

The relationship between union membership, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction

Unions are an important sociopolitical factor and play a crucial role in improving workers' working conditions (Flavin et al., 2010). It has been argued that the institution of unions has an impact on workers' well-being, affecting both their job satisfaction and life satisfaction (Flavin et al., 2010; Flavin & Shufeldt, 2016; Radcliff, 2005).

Union membership has a positive impact on workers' well-being. Flavin and colleagues (2010) analyzed the main mechanisms through which unions influence subjective well-being. Unions can help increase the well-being of their members by providing cognitive and social skills as a participatory institution. By participating in a union, members develop their communication and problem-solving skills. In addition, unions can improve well-being by fostering social and emotional bonds in the workplace. Psychosocial research has shown that social support networks can protect against the negative effects of work-related stress (Demerouti et al., 2001; Jackson, 1992; Martini et al., 2019): unions provide opportunities for human interaction that reduce perceptions of social isolation and loneliness while facilitating emotional support and solidarity among colleagues (Lowe & Northcott, 1988). There is empirical evidence of a positive relationship between social affiliation and personal well-being (Lane, 2000; Putnam, 2000), so union membership could help increase workers' life satisfaction. In addition, union members may have a collective say in workplace design (Haile et al., 2012; Hirschman, 1970). Union membership can provide opportunities for discussion and change in working conditions, leading to a greater sense of self-determination and less alienation. Less work alienation may also be associated with greater job and life satisfaction.

This viewpoint states that union membership increases job satisfaction; however, the relationship between unionization and job satisfaction remains controversial (Haile et al., 2012; Hipp & Givan, 2015). Contrasting results suggest the opposite effect of union membership: unionised workers showed lower job satisfaction compared to their non-unionised colleagues (Garcia-Serrano, 2009; Haile et al., 2012; Heywood et al., 2002). This seems paradoxical because one of the goals of employee unions is to improve working conditions by supporting policy changes that benefit the workforce, providing mutual aid, and negotiating collective bargaining agreements (Givan, 2007; Rosenfeld, 2014). This seemingly contradictory finding can be explained by the notion that union members are not less satisfied, but that they have the means to voice their dissatisfaction without fear that it will be used against them (Hammer & Avgar, 2005): this is the voice hypothesis (Haile et al., 2012, p. 4). In addition, unionised workers may also have higher expectations about the quality of their jobs and working conditions than non-unionised workers: these higher expectations may lead to dissatisfaction (Barling et al., 1992). Another plausible explanation is the sorting hypothesis (Haile et al., 2012, p. 4), which is based on reverse causality: dis-

satisfied workers are more likely to join a union to try to change unsatisfactory working conditions (Hipp & Givan, 2015).

Finally, unions have been reported to have little ability to influence job satisfaction related to the actual outcomes they can achieve. Union outcomes differ across countries. Scholars distinguish between institutions that enable or prevent unions from improving working conditions, such as the structure of collective bargaining, the soundness of unions, and the configuration of the labor and welfare state (Hipp & Givan, 2015).

To our knowledge, no recent study has examined the relationship between union membership and work alienation, with the exception of an older study by Neal & Seeman (1964), which found lower work alienation among union members. One possible explanation is that union membership reduces alienation because it gives its members a say in how the workplace is structured (Flavin et al., 2010). However, to our knowledge, there is no study that has examined the role of union membership in the relationship between workplace alienation, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction. Union membership may provide social support and a sense of purpose for work and reduce the impact of work alienation on satisfaction, which results from a lack of meaning and control and from worker isolation.

In summary, we hypothesize that patterns of the relationship between work alienation, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction differ between unionised and non-unionised workers: For union members, there is a less negative relationship between work alienation and life satisfaction. This is Hypothesis 4 of the present paper.

METHODS

Participants

Data were collected through a survey of public sector employees in northwestern Italy. We contacted participants directly in the workplace between October and December 2017 through the mediation of union representatives. Participation was voluntary and anonymity was guaranteed. The study sample consisted of 479 public sector employees (64.3% female; mean age 52.86 years, SD 8.46); 35.8% had a college degree, 50.5% had a high school diploma, and 23.7% had a compulsory education; 20.3% were single, 62.9% were married, 14.5% were divorced, and 2.4% were widowed; 26.5% worked in administration, 19.4% in education, 14.6% in culture, 13.5% in technology, 12.4% in social services, and 13.6% in other services; almost half (45.9%) belonged to a union.

Measures

Data were collected via a self-report questionnaire that included the following scales:

- The Work Alienation Scale (Nair & Vohra, 2009); 8 items (e.g. “I often wish I would do something different”), rated on a 7-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to (1) strongly agree (7) (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .79$)
- The measurement of job satisfaction (McNichols, et al., 1978); 4 items (e.g., “I am satisfied with my job”) were rated on a 7-point Likert scale from never (1) to always (7) (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .86$)
- The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SLS) (Diener et al., 1985); 5 items (e.g. “In most cases my life corresponds to my ideal”), rated on a 7-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7) ($\alpha = .84$)
- Socio-demographic information (gender, age, educational level, marital status, union membership or not).

Questionnaires were administered in Italian. The items on the work alienation and job satisfaction scales were the same as those in Fedi et al. (2016) translated and used; the SLS is widespread in Italy and the translated version has even recently confirmed its validity (Di Fabio & Gori, 2020).

STATISTICAL ANALYSES AND RESULTS

Preliminary statistics

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviation, and correlations between the scales. Work alienation correlated negatively with the other scales. Job satisfaction and life satisfaction were positively correlated. We used Student's t-test to compare the responses between the trade union members and the non-union employees. We found only one significant difference in work alienation ($t = -2.02$; $p < .05$): the level of alienation was higher among trade union members ($M = 3.26$) than among non-union employees ($M = 3.05$).

Table 1 Descriptive statistics and correlations between scales

	Mean	SD	Pearson's r	
			Work alienation	Job satisfaction
Work alienation	3.14	1.12		
Job satisfaction	4.60	1.13	-.52***	
Satisfaction with life	4.52	1.16	-.21***	.30***

SD denotes standard deviation; *** $p < .001$

Verification of the hypotheses

Based on the literature and preliminary analyses, we tested a multigroup structural equation model that hypothesised relationships between union members (group 1) and non-unionised workers (group 2): a negative relationship between work alienation and job and life satisfaction (hypothesis 1) and a positive relationship between job and life satisfaction (hypothesis 2). We conducted bootstrap analyses to examine the role of job satisfaction in mediating the relationship between work alienation and life satisfaction (hypothesis 3). We tested the model simultaneously on unionised and non-unionised workers to verify hypothesis 4 by testing the invariance of the model between the two groups. We used the software package AMOS 27 for the analyses. As frequently recommended (Hu & Bentler, 1998), we tested model fit using both incremental and absolute fit indices: χ^2 , CFI (comparative fit index; Bentler, 1990), SRMR (standardized root mean square residual; Hu & Bentler, 1998), and RMSEA (root mean square error of approximation; Steiger, 1990). The model was acceptable: $\chi^2 (232) = 544.35$, $p < .001$, χ^2/df ratio = 2.35, CFI = .91, SRMR = .062, RMSEA = .053 (90% CL = .047 .059). The model with standardized parameters estimated for unionised and non-unionised workers is shown in Figures 1 and 2.

The following correlations were found: work alienation was negatively related with job satisfaction (members $b = -.762$, $SE = .112$, $p < .001$; non-unionised employees $b = -.662$, $SE = .095$, $p < .001$); alienation from work was negatively related to life satisfaction only among non-unionised workers ($b = -.329$, $SE = .121$, $p = .006$); job satisfaction was positively associated with life satisfaction only among union members ($b = .327$, $SE = .139$, $p = .018$).

Bootstrap analyses were conducted using the percentile method to estimate the indirect relationship between work alienation and life satisfaction, and showed a sta-

tistically significant indirect relationship between work alienation and life satisfaction for union members ($b = -.25$; $SE = .12$; $p = .036$) but not for the non-unionised workers ($b = -.13$; $SE = .11$; $p = .176$). The variance in job satisfaction explained by the model was 49% and 43% for union and non-unionised workers, respectively, and 7% and 17% for life satisfaction.

To test the invariance of the pattern of relationships between work alienation, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction between union and non-unionised workers, we tested a second model (M1) and set these parameters as the same for the two groups. The premise is that the hypothesis of invariance is accepted if the difference in the χ^2 -values of the M1 model compared to the first model is not significant for a number of degrees of freedom equal to the difference in degrees of freedom between the two models. The fit indexes of model M1 were: $\chi^2(235) = 549.19$, $p < .001$, χ^2/df ratio = 2.34, CFI = .91, SRMR = .065, RMSEA = .053 (90% CL = .047-.059). The difference between the models confirmed the hypothesis of invariance, $\Delta\chi^2(3) = 4.84$, $p = .184$. The test revealed no difference in the pattern of relationships between the two groups, although some parameters were significant for one group. This suggests a moderating effect of union membership on the relationship between work alienation and life satisfaction.

Table 2 Hierarchical regression analysis of satisfaction with life. Standardized parameters

Predictors	Step 1	Step 2
Work alienation	-.22***	-.32***
Union membership (1 = Yes)	.02	-.28*
Union membership * Work alienation		.34*
R ² (corrected)	.04	.05

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

To test the moderating effect, we conducted a hierarchical regression analysis using SPSS 27 software. In the first step, we entered work alienation and union membership (0 = no, 1 = yes). In the second step, we entered the moderation effect. The results (Table 2) show that union membership moderates the relationship between work alienation and life satisfaction. Union membership decreased the negative relationship between work alienation and life satisfaction.

DISCUSSION

With this study, we aimed to examine the relationship between work alienation, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction and to determine whether union membership modulates these relationships.

We found a negative relationship between work alienation and job satisfaction, confirming hypothesis 1. This result is consistent with previous observations that work alienation negatively predicts job satisfaction (Chiaburu et al., 2014; Fedi et al., 2016; Hirschfeld et al., 2000). We found a negative relationship between work alienation and life satisfaction only among unionised workers, consistent with the spillover hypothesis (Loscocco & Rochelle, 1991). Our results show that work alienation has an effect on overall life satisfaction and has a negative impact on individuals' subjective quality of life. Work alienation, defined as disaffection or disconnection from work resulting from perceived powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, disengagement, and isolation, can be a source of acute discomfort at work and extend

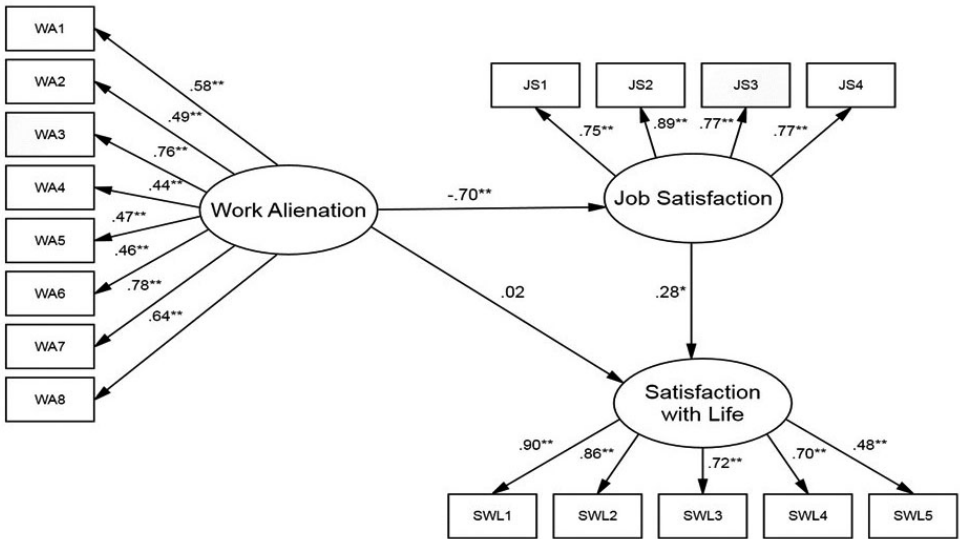


Figure 1 Estimated parameters for the trade union member group: standardized regression weights
 ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

Note. Errors of the indicators and latent variables were omitted from the figure in order to make it easier to view.

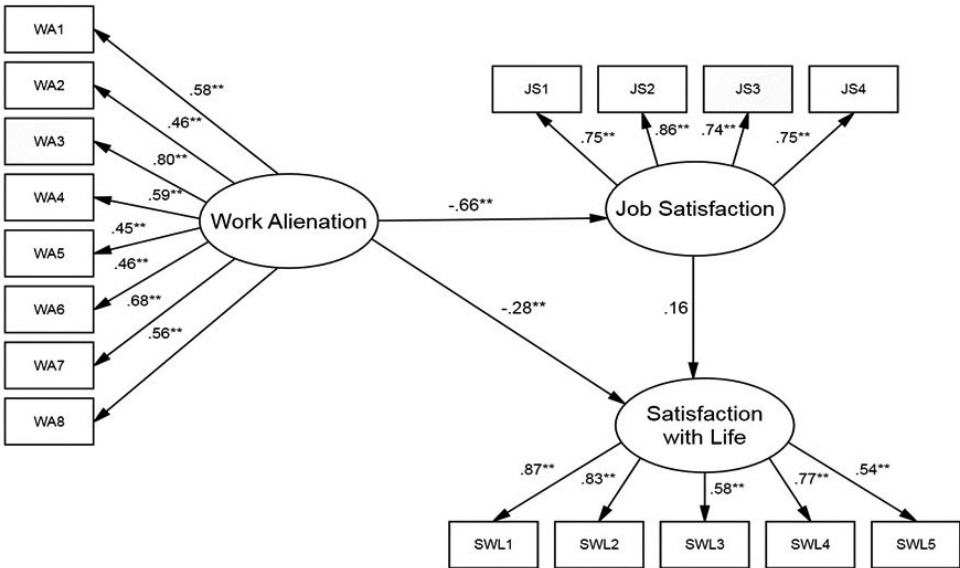


Figure 2. Estimated parameters for the non-union employee group: standardized regression weights
 ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

Note. Errors of the indicators and latent variables were omitted from the figure in order to make it easier to view.

beyond the work context to negatively affect life satisfaction in general. According to the spillover model, dissatisfaction at work can negatively affect areas other than work. The results of our study indicate a positive relationship between satisfaction in the work and life domains, confirming hypothesis 2.

Our data only partially support hypothesis 3. The relationship between work alienation and life satisfaction was mediated by job satisfaction, whereas the coefficients for a direct relationship between work alienation and life satisfaction differed between unionised and non-unionised workers. Although the mediation model was invariant for the two groups, we must account for union membership when examining the relationship between work alienation, job satisfaction, and life satisfaction. Our results suggest a negative relationship between work alienation and job satisfaction for both unionised and non-unionised workers, but the negative relationship between work alienation and life satisfaction was weaker for unionised than non-unionised workers. We found that the direct effect of work alienation on life satisfaction was moderated by union membership. This observation is consistent with hypothesis 4.

In an apparent paradox, union members were more alienated than their non-unionised colleagues but they were not less satisfied with their lives. Based on previous findings (Barling et al., 1992; Hipp & Givan, 2015), we hypothesize that people join a union because they experience more alienating working conditions or perhaps have greater expectations of working conditions after being politicized by union membership. Since their higher levels of alienation do not negatively affect their quality of life outside of work, we can conclude that union membership may protect workers from becoming distressed in areas other than work. Unions give their members “a collective say in how workplaces are run” (Flavin et al., 2010, p. 439); perhaps this reinforces the perception that workers can indeed improve their working conditions through collective action. In addition, unions help to create social networks and opportunities for greater emotional support at work (Flavin et al., 2010; Martini et al., 2019), mitigating the negative impact of working conditions on personal overall well-being.

Among union members, the relationship between work alienation and life satisfaction was mediated by job satisfaction, while a direct effect of work alienation on life satisfaction was less evident. Feeling disconnected from work due to alienating conditions and contextual or organizational factors (Ozer et al., 2019) can lead to negative attitudes toward work and affect the domain outside of work, resulting in lower life satisfaction.

This observation is consistent with the spillover hypothesis (Loscosso & Rochelle, 1991); it can be interpreted as a perception of deeper embeddedness in the organization by unionised members. The difference between unionised and non-unionised employees seems to support this explanation: job satisfaction was less related to life satisfaction among non-unionised workers. However, according to the segmentation hypothesis (Loscosso & Rochelle, 1991), workers who do not belong to a union are able to separate their work and nonwork lives, probably because they are less interested in workplace conditions than their unionised peers.

Union membership appears to have a protective function. While the level of work alienation was higher among unionised workers, the level of life satisfaction did not differ significantly between the two groups. The relationship between work alienation and life satisfaction was mediated by job satisfaction among unionised workers, while job satisfaction and life satisfaction were less related among non-unionised workers. The fact that job satisfaction affects life satisfaction among unionised workers but not among their non-unionised colleagues may be explained by the fact that people who join unions tend to be more involved in the organization for which they work.

However, while non-unionised employees showed lower levels of organizational involvement, perhaps because they were less motivated to change their workplace conditions, their subjective perceptions of work quality are negatively affected, with negative consequences for the organization (e.g., absenteeism and counterproductive behaviors; Li & Chen, 2018). Our findings suggest that work alienation is a variable for greater work distress and provide empirical evidence for Hall's (1994, p. 111) observation that "the negative side of work is not dissatisfaction, it is alienation".

CONCLUSION

Our results show that union membership plays an important role in life satisfaction and personal well-being. An innovative aspect of the present study is that it examines the relationship between work alienation and satisfaction in work and life domains, taking into account the little-studied variable of union membership. Work alienation is a serious consequence of work distress. Previous studies have focused on the role trade unions play in relation to other work variables such as job satisfaction (Garcia-Serrano, 2009; Hammer & Avgar, 2005; Hipp & Givan, 2015). The results of our study fill a gap in the current literature on the relationship between union membership and life satisfaction. Thus, our study extends previous studies (Flavin et al., 2010; Flavin & Shufeldt, 2016) and shows that labor union membership and participation can promote quality of life by moderating the negative relationship between alienating work conditions and overall life satisfaction.

Limitations and future research

This study has some limitations. The correlational nature of our data precludes making assumptions about the direction of the relationship between variables. Quasi-experimental or longitudinal studies are needed to replicate our results. In addition, the situational nature of the study makes it difficult to generalize the results to other countries and cultures or to all workers. Future studies should extend the study to other types of organizations, the private sector, and other countries. Certain limitations concern the study participants: we used a convenience sample; mediation by union representatives in recruiting participants may have introduced bias. We cannot determine whether the study sample was affected positively or negatively by the fact that a union representative was involved in administering the questionnaire. To minimize bias, we distributed a sufficiently large number of questionnaires and indicated on the first page of the questionnaire the objectives of the study and the anonymous and aggregate treatment of the data.

Despite these limitations, our results appear to combine an individual perspective associated with perceptions of one's own well-being with a more organizational analysis focused on how people live in their organizations. Moreover, our data show that despite the decline in union status in Italy (Regalia, 2017), trade union membership and participation can still significantly influence subjective well-being. For this reason, a future area of research should focus on the buffering effect of worker unions. This can be done by expanding our understanding of how organized political interest groups such as labor unions can mitigate the effects of negative experiences at work on subjective well-being and indirectly help to protect workers from the harmful consequences of reduced life satisfaction.

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SOUHRN

Členství v odborech pro kvalitu života? Zprostředkující účinek spokojenosti s prací mezi pracovním odcizením a životní spokojeností pracovníků organizovaných a neorganizovaných v odborech

Lidé tráví hodně svého času v práci, což může mít velký dopad na jejich životní spokojenost. Bylo zjištěno, že spokojenost s prací ovlivňuje

spokojenost se životem, ale role práce byla málo zkoumána. Zatímco bylo zjištěno, že odcizení snižuje životní spokojenost, musí být ještě zkoumáno, jak spokojenost s prací souvisí s těmito dvěma konstrukty. V současné době je role členství v odborech podceňovaným aspektem tohoto vztahu. Ačkoli byl vztah mezi členstvím v odborech a spokojeností s prací zkoumán mnohokrát, vztah s jinými proměnnými (např. pracovní odcizení a spokojenost se životem) byl studován méně. Proto autoři zkoumali dopad pracovního odcizení na spokojenost s prací a životní spokojenost ve vztahu k členství v odborech pracovníků veřejné správy. Odpovědi na sebehodnotící dotazník (N = 479) naznačily negativní vztah mezi pracovním odcizením a spokojeností s prací a negativní vliv na celkovou kvalitu života. Vztah mezi pracovním odcizením a životní spokojeností byl však zmírněn členstvím v odborech. Členství v odborech zmírnilo negativní vztah mezi pracovním odcizením a životní spokojeností a lze je považovat za ochranný faktor pro kvalitu života zaměstnanců.