

ment rates and lower average wages, employees in professional, managerial, and nonmanual jobs were much more satisfied than employees performing manual work. Likewise, in countries with greater socioeconomic inequality, employees performing nonmanual work were more satisfied with their jobs than their counterparts engaged in manual work.

Overall, this study suggests that differences in job satisfaction across countries are largely the result of individual-level factors and the composition of the workforce in each country as opposed to any inherent national characteristics. In a nutshell, while the same general factors may affect job satisfaction across countries, what differs is their prevalence (e.g., proportions of professional/managerial jobs relative to others). According to Pichler and Wallace, this makes sense because people—at least across Europe—generally prefer jobs that are interesting, secure, and of a higher level. And while institutional factors appear to matter less than previously thought, Pichler and Wallace note that they nonetheless can help us understand the effects of individual and compositional factors across countries. In addition, inherent national features, such as culture and history, can certainly help in understanding why particular constellations of individual and compositional characteristics have evolved within particular countries.

Finally, Pichler and Wallace's research has some limitations. For instance, both job satisfaction and job characteristics were measured with self-reports that were completed by the same people. In essence, this may have inflated certain relationships (e.g., relationships connecting job satisfaction with individual job factors). Moreover, the European Union has a well-developed economy with relatively high social homogeneity compared with the rest of the world. Put another way, differences in institutional factors, such as wage levels and socioeconomic inequality, are probably less pronounced across the European Union than across the globe. This means that institutional factors may have a more prominent role if wider differences across more disparate geographic regions are considered. Nevertheless, Pichler and Wallace's work sheds important light

on a complex subject, and the limitations inherent in their study simply underscore the need for more research about why job satisfaction differences exist across countries.

Source: Pichler, F., & Wallace, C. (2009). What are the reasons for differences in job satisfaction across Europe? Individual, compositional, and institutional explanations. *European Sociological Review*, 25, 535–549.

Does Treating the Permanent Workforce Well Matter to Temporary Employees?

Research Brief by Nikos Bozionelos, Professor of Management and Organizational Behavior, Athens University of Economics and Business, and Ioannis Nikolaou, Associate Professor of Organizational Behavior, Athens University of Economics and Business

In their quest for flexibility and adaptability, organizations often rely on temporary employees. Yet temporary employees are more difficult to motivate and less likely to be committed to the organization than permanent employees. This should come as no surprise since the relationship of temporary employees to the client organization is likely to be governed by an economic exchange mentality instead of a social exchange. Economic exchange relationships are typically perceived to be of short duration, involve limited trust and investment, and strongly emphasize the financial element. On the other hand, social exchange relationships are viewed as longer term in nature, demanding personal investment, and revolving around trust and feelings of obligation.

Consequently, one way to improve the attitudes and behaviors of temporary employees is to provide support, inducements, and additional responsibilities similar to those enjoyed by permanent employees. However, this is at odds with the very motive behind the use of temporary employees. Nevertheless, it is in organizations' best interests to somehow maximize the motivation and commitment of temporary employees. The question is, can this be accomplished in a cost-efficient

manner without changing the employment status of temporary workers? An interesting new study by Bard Kuvaas and Anders Dysvik (both at the Norwegian School of Management) suggests the answer may be yes. Indeed, Kuvaas and Dysvik propose an alternative approach as a way of earning the commitment and optimal performance of temporary employees. Ironically, that approach involves demonstrating the organization's willingness to invest in *permanent employees* by providing them with developmental structures and opportunities.

Kuvaas and Dysvik reasoned that the way an organization approaches the development of its permanent staff affects how temporary employees see it, shaping their own exchange relationship with the organization and, in turn, their job behaviors. These include both prescribed behaviors, which encompass activities that are formally part of the job (i.e., task performance), and discretionary behaviors (e.g., organizational citizenship behaviors, or OCBs), which encompass activities that are not formally part of the job but that positively contribute to the functioning of the organization. Examples of such discretionary behaviors include helping others or making suggestions for improvement.

In addition, Kuvaas and Dysvik adopted a social information processing approach to link temporary employees' perceptions about organizational investment in permanent employees with their views of the exchange relationship they hold with the organization. The social information processing perspective suggests that individuals search their social environment for cues that assist them in interpreting situations and events they encounter. The social climate of the organization is one such cue. Investment in permanent employee development should foster an organizational climate that is characterized by trust, mutual obligations, cooperation, commitment, and lasting relationships. The cue for temporary employees in this case is that the organization can be trusted and that relationships within it have a lasting character that includes cooperation and information sharing. On the other hand, low levels of perceived investment in the development of permanent employees should lead temporary em-

ployees to view their relationship with the organization merely as an economic exchange—one lacking in any real concern for the workforce or long-term relationships.

Of course, these views of the relationship with the organization may affect temporary employees' work behaviors. Relationships based on perceived social exchange should create a sense of obligation that will motivate additional effort and, ultimately, superior task performance. Moreover, a social exchange relationship should increase the odds that temporary employees will engage in organizational citizenship behaviors that benefit other employees and the organization itself.

Kuvaas and Dysvik tested these predictions by surveying 375 temporary employees working in a variety of industries and job functions. Their findings were largely in line with predictions. In particular, temporary employees who felt that the client organization invested in the development of its permanent employees were also likely to feel that they held a social exchange relationship with the organization as opposed to one that was merely economic. Furthermore, temporary employees who felt that they were in a social exchange relationship also reported higher task performance and greater OCBs. Conversely, temporary employees who perceived that they were in an economic exchange relationship with the client organization reported poorer task performance.

Finally, it is important to note that these results applied to all temporary employees, regardless of their employment motives (i.e., whether they were aspiring to permanent positions with the client organization or not). Granted, the study did have limitations, which included relying on self-reports with the data all being collected at a single point in time. Nevertheless, the results were intriguing and offer some important potential implications. For instance, they underscore the notion that treating the permanent workforce well and investing in its development benefits organizations on two levels. Obviously, such efforts tend to produce more skilled, motivated, and committed permanent employees. But these efforts may also improve the job performance and discretionary behavior of the temporary workforce. Considering

the increasingly important role that temporary employees play in many company workforces, such benefits may prove to be substantial.

In essence, Kuvaas and Dysvik are saying that management should not underestimate the value of creating an organizational climate that is trusting, cooperative, and oriented to the long term. These characteristics may lead to stronger social exchange beliefs in the minds of all workers, including temporary employees. Of course, Kuvaas and Dysvik are not suggesting that organizations should enlarge their temporary workforces as a result of their study. Indeed, the extensive use of temporary employees is likely to signal a short-term, cost-driven human resource strategy. This can harm the organizational climate and reduce the commitment and motivation of the permanent workforce, which, in turn, will negatively affect the attitudes and behaviors of temporary employees.

Source: Kuvaas, B., & Dysvik, A. (2009). Perceived investment in permanent employee development and social and economic exchange perceptions among temporary employees. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 39, 2499–2524.

Does the Relationship Between Job Satisfaction and Job Performance Depend on Culture?

Research Brief by Yunxia Zhu, Senior Lecturer in Management, University of Queensland Business School, and Jianmin Feng, Professor and Head of the Business Administration Department, Shenzhen University, China

Maslow pointed out that people seek to satisfy five specific types of needs in life: physiological, safety, social, self-esteem, and self-actualization. Indeed, his model can serve as a basic framework for understanding how job satisfaction relates to job performance. Yet while it is generally accepted that there is a moderate relationship between job satisfaction and job performance, we know very little about the factors that might

strengthen or weaken this relationship. And that includes the role of potentially important moderators such as culture.

Fortunately, Thomas Ng (University of Hong Kong), Kelly Sorensen (University of Georgia), and Frederick Yim (University of Akron) used several theoretical frameworks in their recent study to explore this relationship. In particular, they examined whether the cultural dimensions identified by previous researchers are empirically related to the strength of the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance. Ng, Sorensen, and Yim also distinguished between two types of performance: task-specific performance directly related to the job and “contextual” performance, which includes a broader array of extra-role behaviors such as altruism and citizenship in the workplace.

Their first set of hypotheses proposed that the satisfaction-performance relationship would be stronger in what Hofstede described as individualistic cultures, in what Schwartz described as autonomy cultures, in what Inglehart described as self-expression cultures, and in what the GLOBE Project described as cultures low in institutional collectivism. Ng, Sorensen, and Yim’s second set of hypotheses also relied on several theoretical frameworks. Specifically, they proposed that the job satisfaction-performance relationship would be stronger in low-power-distance cultures (Hofstede), in egalitarian cultures (Schwartz), in secular-rational cultures (Inglehart), and in low-power-distance practice cultures (GLOBE Project).

Ng, Sorensen, and Yim’s third set of hypotheses proposed that the satisfaction-performance relationship would be stronger in low-uncertainty-avoidance cultures (as described by Hofstede and the GLOBE Project). Finally, the fourth set of hypotheses proposed that the satisfaction-performance relationship would be stronger in masculine cultures (Hofstede), in mastery cultures (Schwartz), in survival cultures (Inglehart), and in high-assertiveness cultures (GLOBE Project).

To test these sets of hypotheses, Ng, Sorensen, and Yim used meta-analysis to review 287 articles examining the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance across cultures. They focused on empirical studies conducted outside

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