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The purpose of this study was to identify the relationship between depicted job quality and title on imagined job satisfaction. The study included data from 28 human participants. Participants were grouped into one of four testing conditions. Testing conditions exposed the participant to a positive or negative job title combined with a positive or negative job description. Participants then recorded responses to the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, short form, with regards to their imagined job satisfaction if they occupied that role. The results were analyzed in terms of title or description effects on job satisfaction. Ultimately, both title and description had a significant main effect on survey scores, but there was no interaction between the two variables.

Individual planning is defined by Scholnick and Friedman (1987) as a group of intricate conceptual activities that regulate behaviour. Career planning, in particular, takes this definition and applies it to employment goals. Career planning involves identifying relationships between objectives, available resources, and values, while constructing realistic mental strategies for achievement of identified goals (Galotti, 2002). Career planning is an ongoing human behaviour, and is greatly affected by personal, social, or economic conditions (Bandura, 2001). Research in this area is well-developed, and is the primary influence of this report.

To begin, the effects of motivation on behaviour was addressed. Locke (2000) indicates that action is influenced by motivation in three ways: the facts individuals chose to act upon, the intensity of the action, and the persistence of the individual. These influencers, in turn, are persuaded by existing values. Locke (2000) suggested that these values are constantly at the mercy of social influence. Research from Bandura (2001) corresponded with this sentiment. For Bandura (2001), societal influence pervades the objectives of its members. Career planning

requires commitment of the individual, but also the shared intention and coordination of the community. In this way, career selections may inadvertently receive more social praise than others, and the resulting behaviour is influenced by the latent efforts of the social environment.

For Locke (2000) and Bandura (2001), the western culture of competition contributes to the subjective values established. North and Fiske (2014) suggested that subtle emotional disparities become more prevalent in this competitive environment. In the research conducted by Covington and Roberts (1994), studies suggested that sense of worth is derived from the ability to achieve competitively. When faced with failure, Covington and Roberts (1994) suggested that students are likely to withdraw from the uncomfortable environment, or redouble their efforts to succeed. This is not only threatening to positive self-regard, but is also physically exhausting and potentially quite harmful (Covington and Roberts, 1994).

In the research conducted by Leary, Jongman-Sereno and Diebels (2014), valuation of careers involves a process of intelligence ranking, in which the community affixes judgements on competencies. This is a very concise form of stereotyping, where particular jobs will receive positive or negative esteem, regardless of individual characteristics. This research is echoed by Mahone (1960), where high school students ranked professions and aspirations in accordance with predominating societal beliefs. In their research, students were far more likely to plan for academic streams, resulting in professional careers, than vocational streams, resulting in job-specific training.

Research by Tversky and Kahneman (1981) helped explain why career choices are influenced so greatly. In their studies, the effects of priming were evaluated in decision making. The function of positive portrayal was significantly related to goal setting and motivation, in addition to characteristics of the job, personal values, and habits (Tversky and Kahneman, 1981).

With respect to careers, positive regard to the job itself, regardless of particular characteristics, appears to be a considerable factor (Lee and Allen, 2002).

Further research explores another facet of career planning. The work design theory by Hackman and Oldham (1976) suggested that there are specific job characteristics that are conducive to employee motivation. Their studies identified five core job dimensions that foster the expenditure of effort in the workplace. Three related to tasks performed while two related to general experience. The dimensions identified in their research were task variety, identity, and significance, as well as individual autonomy and feedback. Research by Turner and Lawrence (1965) supported this notion. Their data suggested a link exists between positive job characteristics and job satisfaction.

Additional research provides more support for the dimensions identified by Hackman and Oldham (1976). Scott's (1966) research suggests that satisfaction is highly related to job stimulation. Echoed by Stansfield and Longenecker (2006), efficacy and feedback appear to contribute significantly to overall motivation and performance. This notion is also supported by Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderham (1959). In their research, motivation is encouraged by subjective stimulation, such as regular recognition, notice of achievement, and greater organizational responsibility.

Additionally, job satisfaction was linked with job performance. Lee and Allen (2002) maintain these findings, adding that organizational deviant behaviour is strongly linked to negative work affect. They suggested that positive affect towards a given job invariably influences both satisfaction and performance. They also comment in their research that positive affect is heavily influenced by social pressure, which was analogous to the results indicated in the research by both Locke (2000) and Bandura (2001).

The culmination of all of this research suggests that two principle aspects of jobs will appeal to individual sensibilities. The first principle is social influence, resulting from the perceived value of a job. In this way, research by Locke (2000) and Bandura (2001) are most profitable. The second aspect of job appeal is the characteristics of the job itself. In this way, research by Hackman and Oldham (1976) and Lee and Allen (2002) are most profitable. The current experiment explored the relationship between these two facets. The current experiment explored how job titles and descriptions influence overall job satisfaction. Ultimately, this experiment hoped to provide additional insight between imagined job satisfaction and potential explanations for career planning.

Method

Participants

There were 28 participants in total, divided evenly and randomly among four test groups. Only five participants were recruited via the Sona System at Huron University College. All other participants were peers, colleagues, friends and family of the researcher. Participants pooled from the Sona System were rewarded with a credit of completion towards their fulfillment of Psychology 1100E at Huron University College. All other participants received zero compensation.

Materials

Participants were instructed to read and sign the consent form provided, and to indicate all answers to the questionnaire on the record sheet provided prior to testing. While participants were instructed that they may discontinue the test at any time, every participant followed through to the end of the experiment.

The experiment consisted of a slideshow from Microsoft PowerPoint on a laptop computer and 29 question items on a data record sheet, divided into three separate phases. Phase One and Two consisted of nine questions, provided in Appendix A of this report. The questions of these phases were ultimately not explored in this report, but acted as a buffer between stimulus introductions. Phase Three was the short form Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967). The slide show was utilized to convey information to each participant. The slides either instructed the participant to fill out a portion of the questionnaire or to read the combination of job descriptions and job titles, which were the primary stimuli for this experiment. The slide show did not utilize visual stimuli other than written text, and did not utilize auditory stimuli.

The variation in slides between groups was limited to job description (JD) and job title (JT) combinations. Group A was presented a positive description (PD) and positive title (PT) combination. Group B was presented a negative description (ND) and PT. Group C was presented a PD and negative title (NT). Group D was presented with an ND/NT combination. The possible combinations of job titles and descriptions are provided in Appendix B. Branch Manager at a Canadian Bank was used as the PT, while Sanitation Worker at a Municipal Garbage Facility was used as the NT. Inspiration to use these two job titles came from the research of Owen (2011).

Procedure

Participants were tested in quiet, one-on-one environments with the researcher. Participants were never tested in loud environments where others were present. The study took no more than ten minutes to complete per participant. Participants were encouraged to ask

questions immediately once the study was complete, but was discouraged to ask questions that did not pertain to the immediate slide while conducting the study.

Results

Total scores from the short form Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) were analyzed. Oppositely scored items were corrected before analysis occurred. All participants in this study were analyzed in these results. The scores of each participant, and their respective group membership, can be found in a table in Appendix C.

A 2 × 2 between-subjects ANOVA was conducted with scores on the short form MSQ, Phase 3 of this experiment, as the dependent variable and job titles (positive/negative) and job descriptions (positive/negative) as the independent variables. The results indicated that there was a significant main effect for job title exposure, F (1, 24) = 10.38, $p < 0.05$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.30$, with those who were exposed to the positive job title (M = 68.50, SD = 15.51) scoring significantly higher on the satisfaction survey than those who were exposed to the negative job title (M = 53.36, SD = 17.34). There was also a significant main effect for job description exposure, F (1, 24) = 21.34, $p < 0.05$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.47$, with those who were exposed to the positive job description (M = 71.79, SD = 12.75) scoring significantly higher on the satisfaction survey than those who were exposed to a negative job description (M = 50.07, SD = 15.76). There was not a significant title by description interaction, F (1, 24) = 0.16, $p > 0.05$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.01$.

While there was not a significant interaction between the two independent variables, scores were generally lower with negative titles and descriptions and generally higher with positive titles and descriptions. To explore this relationship, a between-subjects *t*-test was conducted on satisfaction survey scores from Group A and Group B. Participants who were

exposed to both a positive job description and title in Group A (M = 78.43, SD = 11.44) scored significantly higher than those exposed to both a negative job description and title in Group D (M = 41.57, SD = 14.46), t (12) = 5.29, $p < 0.05$, d = 2.83.

Analyses could not be conducted on age, gender, or occupational status due to overwhelming majorities in each group.

Discussion

The results of this experiment provide additional support to the theories suggested in the introduction of this report. As expected, there was a significant main effect of job title in the responses indicated by the participants. The research conducted by Locke (2000) and Bandura (2001) provides insight into these results, suggesting social influence in the satisfaction rankings provided.

The most convincing explanation of these results is inspired by Mahone (1960). This research suggested that high school students invariably chose academic-professional streams. With the current experiment, participants were overwhelmingly students, many of which were recent graduates from high school. If the results of Mahone (1960) are correct, it is not surprising that these participants would rank financial management roles higher than rudimentary sanitation roles. This supports the findings of Leary, Jongman-Sereno and Diebels (2014), where value judgements are especially pronounced for perceived competency. A typical university student is very unlikely to perceive sanitation workers as especially competent, thus contributing to the statistically lower results. These findings are amplified by the research of North and Fiske (2014) in their analysis of competitive environments. Again, university students are unlikely to regard sanitation work as especially enriching employment.

While the results are promising, there is substantial room for improvement. The current experiment exposed participants to very extreme job titles, which must also be considered when discussing these results. Future development of these studies would benefit from additional levels of this independent variable. For more promising results, there should be titles that represent many industries, not simply two. This will take into account the diverse nature of global economies, and thus be more representative of the diverse nature of current and future workers.

With regard to the effects of job descriptions, there was also a significant main effect analyzed in the results. While this outcome was expected, the significance of these results also support the hypothesis that job titles contribute more, overall, to the feeling of satisfaction than job characteristics do, in this synthetic environment. This further supports the suggestions of both Tversky and Kahneman (1981) and Lee and Allen (2002) that characteristics play a role in satisfaction, and might be influenced by subjective factors such as title.

Additionally, these results support the findings of Hackman and Oldham (1976). The design of this experiment was created such that the five core job dimensions defined in Hackman and Oldham (1976) were present, in either positive or negative form, in the job descriptions. The results support the notion that if the five core job characteristics are present, overall satisfaction is enhanced. If this were to be applied to the workforce, the resulting satisfaction, Hackman and Oldham (1976) would suggest, would foster greater expenditure of effort.

The items on the MSQ were worded in such a fashion that identified potential workplace deviant behaviour, as explored by Lee and Allen (2002). The results indicated that strong prevalence of core job dimensions contribute to lower scores in these oppositely-scored items on the survey, and thus higher scores in overall satisfaction.

While indicative of favourable results, improvements could be made to the descriptions utilized in this experiment. For instance, the wording of the positive and negative job descriptions might not have accounted for additional influencers. As research by Tversky and Kahneman (1981) suggested, priming effects contribute substantially to the overall result. The descriptions should be vetted by multiple researchers, in an effort to eliminate wordiness and unintended priming effects. Future research could also benefit from exploring precisely which aspects of job motivation contributed to overall scores in satisfaction. In doing this, the focus of the positive and negative job descriptions should be on one particular job dimension, rather than all five.

The importance of this research is quite significant. As Covington and Roberts (1994) suggested in their research, the implications of perceived success and failure are potentially very harmful. Career trajectories influence future decisions, which in turn are influenced by society (Bandura, 2001). While this bodes well for students who succeed, students who fail unsurprisingly withdraw (Mahone, 1960). In environments that consistently push students in the direction of academic-professional streams, the by-products of these failures are incredible. Students who would benefit from vocational learning are encouraged towards a different direction (Mahone, 1960). Inevitably, jobs that are crucial to the function of a modern economy are underappreciated (Jones, 2011).

This research provides insight into the development of career planning, and encourages community leaders take appropriate action. While social influence is a good thing, as Bandura (2001) notes, its pervasiveness can also be harmful. Rather than inflating academic-professional streams, support should be evenly applied to all career routes in a given economy. Rather than devaluing very important roles in modern society, individuals should be free of social ridicule to

occupy jobs that suit their needs and talents. Moreover, critical jobs in a modern economy, such as sanitation work, should be encouraged and praised. After all, as Owen Jones (2011) noted in his book on the demonization of the working class, the western world would be a radically different place if sanitation workers suddenly disappeared.

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Appendix A

Part One

Age: _____

Gender: _____

Occupational Status: _____

Part Two

"Ask yourself… how satisfied am I with this aspect of my job, given what I know about it…"

(1 = Not Satisfied / 5 = Extremely Satisfied)

1. The chance to make use of my many abilities:	1	2	3	4	5
2. The tasks I have to do are clearly defined for me:	1	2	3	4	5
3. The value of my role in the corporation:	1	2	3	4	5
4. The chance to be "somebody" in the community:	1	2	3	4	5
5. The feedback I get from my job:	1	2	3	4	5
6. Generally, I am _____ with my job:	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B

Group A

Positive Title: Branch Manager, at a Canadian Bank

Positive Description: You are an integral part of working society. Every day you get up at a reasonable hour to do your job. You support thousands of people with what you do—and you love it! You get to do a multitude of things throughout the day, and it is never a dull moment. A key part of your job is also making sure that you provide and listen to as much feedback as possible. The pay is very generous. Even better, most weeks you actually work *less* than the regular 40 hours and still get paid for it! Your employee benefits package is strong: you have full health and dental coverage for you and your family; and your pension is building with every year. You will certainly retire comfortably at the age of 55.

Group B

Positive Title: Branch Manager, at a Canadian Bank

Negative Description: You are run of the mill in working society. You are nowhere near the top of the pyramid in your organization, but you also are not at the bottom. Every day you get up at 6:30 AM to get ready for your 8:00 start time. Your presence at work supports thousands of people—and they never give you any credit for it. You have to do the same thing every day, so the workload isn't the worst. A key part of your job is also making sure that you listen to instructions and follow through with orders as much as possible. The pay is not terrible, but your supervisors and their supervisors easily make double what you do. Sometimes you work overtime, but don't get any additional pay for it. Your benefits package is okay, but you sometimes find it difficult to pay for whatever the package doesn't cover. You're stressed about retirement because you can't seem to put any additional money away. You don't know if you're ever going to really retire.

Group C

Negative Title: Sanitation Specialist, at a Municipal Garbage Facility

Positive Description: Same as above.

Group D

Negative Title: Sanitation Specialist, at a Muncipal Garbage Facility

Negative Description: Same as above.

Appendix C

Title 1 = Positive 2 = Negative	Description 1 = Positive 2 = Negative	Age	Gender 1 = Male 2 = Female	Occupation 1 = Student 2 = Both 3 = Employed	Minnesota Job Satisfaction Survey Scores
1.00	1.00	20.00	2.00	2.00	60.00
1.00	1.00	20.00	2.00	2.00	86.00
1.00	1.00	21.00	2.00	2.00	89.00
1.00	1.00	19.00	2.00	2.00	76.00
1.00	1.00	23.00	1.00	2.00	81.00
1.00	1.00	25.00	2.00	2.00	67.00
1.00	1.00	19.00	2.00	1.00	90.00
1.00	2.00	20.00	2.00	2.00	67.00
1.00	2.00	19.00	2.00	1.00	64.00
1.00	2.00	18.00	2.00	2.00	56.00
1.00	2.00	24.00	2.00	2.00	35.00
1.00	2.00	18.00	2.00	2.00	67.00
1.00	2.00	21.00	1.00	2.00	50.00
1.00	2.00	21.00	2.00	1.00	71.00
2.00	1.00	19.00	1.00	1.00	41.00
2.00	1.00	19.00	2.00	2.00	71.00
2.00	1.00	22.00	1.00	1.00	70.00
2.00	1.00	20.00	2.00	1.00	68.00
2.00	1.00	22.00	2.00	1.00	69.00
2.00	1.00	48.00	2.00	3.00	72.00
2.00	1.00	19.00	1.00	1.00	65.00
2.00	2.00	21.00	2.00	1.00	41.00
2.00	2.00	21.00	2.00	2.00	40.00
2.00	2.00	20.00	2.00	2.00	38.00
2.00	2.00	27.00	1.00	3.00	61.00
2.00	2.00	19.00	2.00	1.00	59.00
2.00	2.00	20.00	1.00	1.00	20.00
2.00	2.00	20.00	2.00	1.00	32.00