

The Major Factors and the Moderating Effects of Regulatory Focus on the Relationship between Dimensions of Job Satisfaction and Overall Job Satisfaction: The case of Middle Manager in Thailand

ปัจจัยที่มีอิทธิพลและตัวกลางในการวัดผลกระทบในการกำกับดูแลที่มุ่งเน้นความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างมิติของความพึงพอใจในงานและความพึงพอใจโดยรวม:กรณีศึกษาผู้บริหารระดับกลางในประเทศไทย

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ABSTRACT

Improving job satisfaction of middle-level managers who play a critical role in the success of most companies is the challenge for top managers. One possible strategy is to improve overall job satisfaction through improving satisfactions with specific dimensions of job satisfaction. This study is an attempt to propose and empirically test the moderating effect of regulatory focus on the effects of satisfactions with dimensions of job satisfaction on overall job satisfaction in middle lever managers in Thailand. The conceptual model and hypotheses were based on literature reviews augmented by a qualitative research. Data were collected from middle-level managers by judgmental sampling and analyzed by a two-group structural equation modeling.

This study would provide a conceptual model and research proposition for future empirical investigation. The findings from the empirical investigation should provide insights and managerial implications for managing the job satisfaction of middle-level managers in Thailand. The objective of this study are: (1) To identifying dimensions of job satisfaction that are relevant in determining overall jobsatisfaction (2) To postulating the moderating effect of regulatory focus on the relationship between each dimension of job satisfaction and overall job satisfaction. (3) To developing research proposition for future empirical investigation.

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These findings show that to this study seeks to contribute to the knowledge in the area of job satisfaction. From the theory development perspective, this study represents an effort to conceptualize and empirically test the moderating effect of regulatory focus on the relationships between dimensions of job satisfaction and overall job satisfaction in middle-level managers. And the major factors satisfaction are: satisfaction with pay, satisfaction with promotional opportunity, satisfaction with learning opportunity, satisfaction with job security, and satisfaction with work environment. The results on this study which can be used in strategic planning and human resources management.

Keywords: regulatory focus, overall job satisfaction, moderator, middle manager.

บทคัดย่อ

การปรับปรุงความพึงพอใจในการทำงานของผู้จัดการระดับกลาง มีบทบาทสำคัญในความสำเร็จของบริษัทส่วนใหญ่ นับเป็นความท้าทายสำหรับผู้จัดการระดับสูง กลยุทธ์หนึ่งที่เป็นไปได้คือ การปรับปรุงความพึงพอใจในการทำงานโดยรวม โดยการผ่านการปรับปรุงในมิติของความพึงพอใจในการทำงานในรายด้าน การศึกษานี้เป็นการนำเสนอ และเป็นการทดสอบเชิงประจักษ์ของตัวกลางในการวัดผลกระทบในเชิงการกำกับดูแลที่มุ่งเน้นความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างมิติของความพึงพอใจในงานและความพึงพอใจโดยรวม:กรณีศึกษาผู้บริหารระดับกลางในประเทศไทย ซึ่งมีกรอบความคิดและการตั้งสมมติฐานจากหลักแนวความคิดของการทบทวนวรรณกรรมตามแบบการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ ข้อมูลถูกรวบรวมจากผู้จัดการระดับกลาง โดยวิธีการเลือกกลุ่มตัวอย่างแบบเจาะจง และการวิเคราะห์โดยการสร้างโมเดลสมการโครงสร้างแบบสองกลุ่ม การศึกษานี้เพื่อเป็นการจัดวางกรอบแนวคิดและการหาข้อเสนอการวิจัย เพื่อใช้ในการตรวจสอบเชิงประจักษ์ในอนาคต ผลการวิจัยจากการสืบสวนเชิงประจักษ์เป็นการให้ข้อมูลเชิงลึกและการบริหารการจัดการในด้านความพึงพอใจของผู้บริหารระดับกลางในประเทศไทย

โดยมีวัตถุประสงค์ของการศึกษาคือ (1) เพื่อระบุมิติของความพึงพอใจในการทำงานในรายด้าน ที่เกี่ยวข้องในการกำหนดความพึงพอใจในการทำงานโดยรวม (2) เพื่อยืนยันตัวกลางในการวัดผลของการกำกับดูแลที่มุ่งเน้นความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างมิติของ ความพึงพอใจในการทำงานในรายด้านและความพึงพอใจในการทำงานโดยรวม และ (3) เพื่อการพัฒนาข้อมูลการวิจัยสำหรับการตรวจสอบข้อมูลเชิงประจักษ์ที่จะนำไปใช้ในอนาคต

ผลการศึกษานี้แสดงให้เห็นว่า มีการค้นพบองค์ความรู้ในศาสตร์ทางด้านความพึงพอใจในการทำงาน จากการพัฒนาผ่านมุมมองทางด้านทฤษฎี ซึ่งจะนำไปสู่การสร้างเป็นกรอบแนวคิดและการทดสอบข้อมูลเชิงประจักษ์ เพื่อใช้เป็นตัวแบบของตัวกลางในการวัดความสัมพันธ์ของผลกระทบในเชิงการกำกับดูแลที่มุ่งเน้นความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างความพึงพอใจในการทำงานรายด้านและความพึงพอใจในการทำงานโดยรวมของผู้จัดการระดับกลาง และปัจจัยที่สำคัญของความพึงพอใจในการทำงานคือ ความพึงพอใจด้านค่าตอบแทน ความพึงพอใจในด้านการได้รับโอกาสในการเลื่อนตำแหน่ง ความพึงพอใจในด้านการมีโอกาสในการเรียนรู้ ความพึงพอใจในด้านมีความมั่นคงในการทำงาน และความพึงพอใจในด้านสภาพแวดล้อมในการทำงาน ซึ่งจากผลการศึกษาดังกล่าวสามารถนำไปใช้ในการวางแผนกลยุทธ์ด้านการจัดการทรัพยากรมนุษย์

คำสำคัญ: การกำกับดูแล ความพึงพอใจโดยรวม ตัวกลางในการวัด ผู้บริหารระดับกลาง

INTRODUCTION

Because of its impact on employees' organizational commitment (Brown and Peterson, 1993; Rutherford et al., 2009), propensity to leave (Rutherford et al., 2009), organizational citizenship behavior (Organ and Ryan, 1995), absenteeism (Wegge et al., 2007), and turnover (Saari and Judge, 2004), managing employees' job satisfaction is critical to the success of firms especially those in service industry (Heskett et al., 1994; Schneider and Bowen, 1995). This is also the reason why job satisfaction is one of the most widely studied concepts in the organizational science literature (O'Leary-Kelly and Griffin, 1995). Apart from studies focusing on consequences of job satisfaction, there have been a considerable number of studies on job satisfaction itself and on factors influencing job satisfaction.

Examples of studies on job satisfaction itself include affect theory (Locke, 1976), equity theory (Huseman, Hatfield, and Miles, 1987), discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1999), and dimensions of job satisfaction (Churchill, Ford, and Walker, 1974). Examples of studies on factors influencing job satisfaction include role ambiguity and role conflict (Brown and Peterson, 1993; Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads, 1994), motivation and hygiene factors (Herzberg, 1964; Herzberg Mausner, and Snyderman, 1959), job characteristics (Hackman and Oldham, 1976), and personal characteristics such as personality (e.g., Judge, Heller, and Mount, 2002), and personality traits (Staw, Bell, and Clausen, 1986).

Regulatory focus is a theoretically compelling individual difference variable that has recently received extensive research attention in the organizational sciences (Gorman et al., 2012). Meta analyses show that regulatory focus may affect work-related outcome such as organizational

citizenship behavior and performance (Lanaj, Chang, and Johnson, 2012), and job satisfaction (Gorman et al., 2012). An interesting question is whether or not and if yes, how regulatory focus affects job satisfaction of middle-level managers who play critical roles in the success of most organizations.

The objective of this study is an attempt to conceptualize the effect of regulatory focus on job satisfaction of middle-level managers in Thailand by (1) identifying dimensions of job satisfaction that are relevant in determining overall job satisfaction, (2) postulating the moderating effect of regulatory focus on the relationship between each dimension of job satisfaction and overall job satisfaction, and (3) developing research proposition for future empirical investigation. This study would provide a conceptual model and research proposition for future empirical investigation. The findings from the empirical investigation should provide insights and managerial implications for managing the job satisfaction of middle-level managers in Thailand.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Depth interviews with two human resources directors of two major corporations (one manufacturing firm and one service firm) in Thailand at the early stage of this study reveal that human resources directors were interested in identifying personal characteristics that may influence the relative impact of dimensions of job satisfaction on overall job satisfaction especially among middle-level managers. Since regulatory focus is a theoretically compelling individual difference variable that has recently received extensive research attention in the organizational sciences (Gorman et al., 2012), it is interesting to investigate if regulatory focus significantly impact the

effects of dimensions of job satisfaction on overall job satisfaction.

The main theory are applied

Concepts and theories used in the literature review are include.

Levels of organization (Bateman, snell, 2013), Job satisfaction (Schermerhorn, Bachrach, 2015), Theory of motivation (Robbins, DeCenzo, 2015) : Maslow's Hierarchy of needs theory (Abraham Maslow), McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y (McGregor), Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Frederick Herzberg), Equity theory (J. Stacey Adams), McClelland's Three-Needs Theory (David McClelland). and Regulatory focus ((Higgins, 1997).

Dimensions of Job Satisfaction and Overall Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction has been defined in many different ways. One of the most widely used definition in organizational research is that of Locke (1976). Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience" (p. 1304). Spector (1997) on the other hand, defined job satisfaction as how content an individual is with his or her job whether or not he or she likes the job. Hulin and Judge (2003), on the other hand, believe that job satisfaction involves multi-dimensional psychological responses to one's job.

According to Spector (1997), job satisfaction is measured at both the global level (whether or not the employee is satisfied with the job overall) or at facet level whether or not the employee is satisfied with different aspects of the job). At facet level, Spector (1997) listed 14 common facets including appreciation, communication, coworkers,

fringe benefits, job conditions, nature of the work, organization, personal growth, policies and procedures, promotional opportunities, recognition, security, and supervision. In developing job satisfaction scale for industrial salespersons, Churchill, Ford, and Walker (1974) identified seven facets or components of job satisfaction including satisfaction with the job, satisfaction with fellow workers, satisfaction with supervision, satisfaction with company policy and support, satisfaction with pay, satisfaction with promotion and advancement, and satisfaction with customers. Churchill, Ford, and Walker's (1974) scale implies that each of the seven dimensions of job satisfaction is a significant determinant of overall job satisfaction. In their two-factor theory, Herzberg (1964) identified achievement, intrinsic interest in the work, responsibility, and advancement as the satisfiers, and company policy and administrative practices, supervision, interpersonal relationship, working conditions, and salary as the dis-satisfiers. The two-factor theory also implies that each of the motivation and hygiene factors is the significant determinant of the overall job satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

Literature review shows that research using facets or dimensions of job satisfaction on consequences of job satisfaction did not include overall job satisfaction in the conceptual models. For example, using Churchill, Ford, and Walker's (1974) dimensions of job satisfaction instead of overall satisfaction, Rutherford et al. (2009) found that only satisfaction with supervision, satisfaction with the job, satisfaction with policy and support are the significant determinants of organizational commitment, and only satisfaction with the job and satisfaction with promotion and advancement are the significant determinants of propensity to

leave. It is quite interesting to investigate if overall job satisfaction is the mediator between dimensions of job satisfaction and consequences of job satisfaction such as organizational commitment and propensity to leave.

Regulatory Focus

Regulatory focus is a goal pursuit theory examining the relationship between the motivation of a person and the way in which her or she goes about achieving his or her goal (Higgins, 1997). There are two types of regulatory focuses, promotional focus and prevention focus. Promotional focus is concerned with advancement, growth, and accomplishment. Prevention focus, on the other hand, is concerned with security, safety, and responsibility.

In organizational science literature, regulatory focus was found to have significant impact on strategic inclinations in decision-making (Crowe and Higgins 1997), emotions at work (Brockner and Higgins, 2001), emotional responses to goal attainment (Higgins, Shah, and Friedman, 1997), and approach and avoidance strength during goal attainment (Forster, Higgins, and Idson, 1998), work behaviors and attitudes (Lanaj, Chang, and Johnson, 2012), overall job satisfaction and commitment (Corman et al., 2012). Note that the studies by Lanaj, Chang, and Johnson (2012) and Corman et al. (2012) are meta-analyses.

Regulatory Focus and Job Satisfaction in Middle-Level Managers

Literature review on job satisfaction and regulatory focus show that there has not been any empirical study that directly addresses the effect of regulatory focus on the relationships between dimensions of job satisfaction and overall job satisfaction especially those of

middle-level managers. To conceptualize the effect of regulatory focus on the relationships between dimensions of job satisfaction and overall job satisfaction of middle-level managers, we first need to identify dimensions of job satisfaction that are relevant in determining overall job satisfaction of middle-level managers and then postulate the moderating effect of regulatory focus on the relationship between each dimension of job satisfaction and overall job satisfaction.

To achieve these objectives, a focus group interview with eight middle-level Thai managers was used to generate qualitative data that supplemented previous research and served as the basis for research propositions. The findings and the research propositions are presented in the next section.

METHODOLOGY: THE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

A focus group interview of eight middle-level managers of a major manufacturing firm and a major service firm in Thailand was conducted. The participants included four males and four females between the age of 25 and 35. All of the participants had undergraduate degree or higher.

The focus group interview was conducted at a university. After greeting the participants, the moderator asked the participants to discuss freely about their jobs. The discussion focused on dimensions of job satisfaction, overall job satisfaction, and views toward job/career. The focus group interview lasted about 45 minutes.

RESULTS

The focus group interview revealed the following insights:

- There were five dimensions of job satisfaction that were important for these middle-level managers: satisfaction with pay, satisfaction with promotional opportunity, satisfaction with learning opportunity, satisfaction with job security, and satisfaction with work environment (including company policy, supervisor, colleagues, and the job itself).

- There were different regulatory foci among the managers. Three managers expressed the traits of promotional focus (e.g., prefer to take risk for advancement) and five of them expressed the traits for prevention focus (e.g., prefer to keep status-quo).

- The managers who displayed the traits of promotional focus indicated that satisfaction with promotional opportunity and satisfaction with learning opportunity were more important than satisfaction with pay, satisfaction with job security, and satisfaction with work environment in determining their overall job satisfaction. The managers who displayed the traits of prevention focus, on the other hand, indicated that satisfaction with pay and satisfaction with job security were more important than promotional opportunity and learning opportunity in determining their overall job satisfaction.

The above findings from the focus group interview support the literature on dimensions of job satisfaction and regulatory focus. Based on the above findings, the following research propositions are proposed for future empirical investigation:

P1: The positive effect of satisfaction with pay on overall job satisfaction will be stronger in middle-level managers with prevention focus than in those with promotion focus.

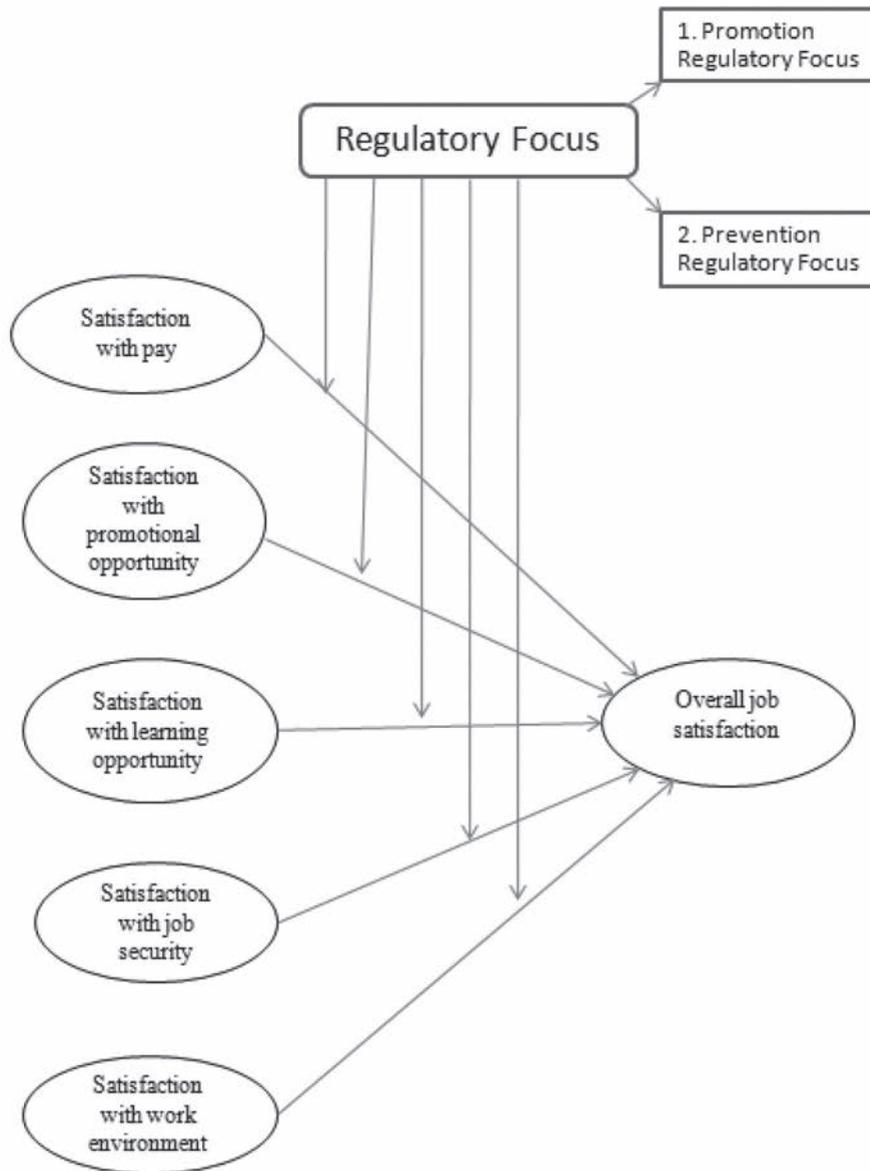
P2: The positive effect of satisfaction with promotional opportunity on overall job satisfaction will be stronger in middle-level managers with promotion focus than those with prevention focus.

P3: The positive effect of satisfaction with learning opportunity on overall job satisfaction will be stronger in middle-level managers with promotion focus than those with prevention focus.

P4: The positive effect of satisfaction with job security on overall job satisfaction will be stronger in middle-level managers with prevention focus than in those with promotional focus.

P5: The positive effect of satisfaction with work environment on overall job satisfaction will be stronger in middle-level managers with prevention focus than in those with promotional focus.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



CONCLUSION

Theoretical Contribution

The main theoretical contribution of this study is the conceptualization of the moderating effect of regulatory focus on the relationships between dimensions of job satisfaction on overall job satisfaction for middle-level managers. The research propositions will provide a framework for future empirical investigation.

Methodological Contribution

This study also demonstrates how qualitative research can be used to help conceptualize a phenomenon that does not have full literature support or is context-specific (i.e., can vary depending on the subjects).

Managerial Implications

The findings from future empirical investigation would provide insights to senior managers and human resources directors on how to manage job satisfaction of middle-level managers. Different rewards can be used to motivate middle-level managers with different regulatory focus. For example, job promotions and support for further education (e.g., scholarship for MBA) may be given as rewards to middle-level managers with promotion focus while significant salary increases or rotation to more secure jobs may be given as rewards to those with prevention focus.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

The main limitation of this study is the fact that the conceptual model is obtained from limited literature and a qualitative research. As such, the findings from this study should not be used until they are confirmed by empirical research.

The research propositions identified in this study should be empirically tested. The appropriate research design for the empirical study is sample survey with middle-level managers. In terms of sample size, at least 200 samples will be needed as structural equation modeling (SEM) is the appropriate data analysis for the sample survey. In terms of measures, each of the constructs (i.e., satisfaction with pay, satisfaction with promotional opportunity, satisfaction with learning opportunity, satisfaction with job security, satisfaction with work environment, overall satisfaction, and regulatory focus) should be operationalized as a multiple-item scales so that the measurement property of the construct (i.e., reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity) can be assessed. In terms of data analysis, structural equation modeling should be used to test both the measurement model and the structural model (i.e., hypothesis testing).

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