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What is job satisfaction?

Edwin A. Locke

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Abstract

Despite considerable interest in the study of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction, our understanding of these phenomena has not advanced at a pace commensurate with research efforts. It is argued that a major reason for this lack of progress is the implicit conception of causality accepted by most psychologists. It is called the policy of "correlation without explanation." The present approach to the topic of job attitudes emphasizes a more conceptual approach to the problem. Using Rand's theory of emotions as a starting point, the concepts of *satisfaction*, *dissatisfaction*, *value*, *emotion*, and *appraisal*, and their interrelationships are discussed. The present theory of job satisfaction is contrasted with previous theories. Data illustrating an approach to satisfaction based on the present theory are given. Other issues discussed are: value hierarchies; the dynamic character of values; overall job satisfaction; the Herzberg two-factor theory; the measurement of satisfaction and values; and rational vs. irrational values.



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