Navigating Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction Among Working Americans

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1 Introduction

2 Data

Based at the University of Chicago since 1972, the General Social Survey (GSS) is a project with the objective of monitoring and analyzing the intricacies of American society (1). The GSS Data Explorer makes it so that data retrieved from the project is a publicly available resource, accessible to various types of people, such as educators, policymakers, or researchers through the National Opinion Research Center (NORC).

The dataset used for this paper was retrieved from The General Social Survey (GSS) Data Explorer website (citation). We retrieved survey data relating to work and job in the years of 1989, 1998, 2006, and 2016.

2.1 Source Data and Methodology

Majority of the GSS data was collected through face-to-face interviews with the target population of adults (18+) residing in the United States, but starting in 2002, Computer-assisted personal interviewing methods were introduced (3).

All the survey data used was in relation to job and work in the Work Orientation Module; the specific variable names extracted from the dataset being intjob, hlpoths, and hlpsoc.

2.2 Data Cleaning

The open source statistical programming language R was used to clean and analyze the data, along with producing the graphs. The main packages that supported this process included tidyverse, ggplot2, knitr, kableExtra, here…

The cleaning process involved filtering the specific data variables used for our analysis from the downloaded GSS dataset, and renaming any variables with meaningful names. For example, rather than "intjob" being the column name for "importance of interesting work in a job" , we renamed it to interesting_work, as shown in Table #. Further, the numerical values representing the participants' responses (1-5) were changed to the representative words/phrases (not important, very important, etc.).

Table 1: yus

Variable	NewName	Description	ExampleResponse
intjob	interesting_work	Importance of interesting work in a job	Very Important
hlpoths	helping_others	Importance of helping others in a job	Neither
hlpsoc	social_usefulness	Importance of social usefulness in a job	Not Important

Table 2: Respondent Gender Demographics by Year

year	sex	count	percentage
1989	female	786	56.51
1989	male	605	43.49
1998	female	678	58.80
1998	male	475	41.20
2006	female	807	53.48
2006	male	702	46.52
2016	female	766	52.22
2016	male	701	47.78

Table 3: Respondent Age Demographics by Year

Year	Mean	Median	Mode	Min	Max
1989	45	42	28	18	89
1998	45	42	33	18	89
2006	47	46	47	18	89
2016	49	49	58	18	89

Variable	NewName	Description	ExampleResponse

2.3 Data Terminology

The response choices for each question and their respective code in brackets are as follows: Inapplicable (-100), No Answer (-99), Do Not Know/Cannot Choose (-98), Very Important (1), Important (2), Neither (3), Not important (4), and Not Important At All (5). For our graphs, we did not include the Inapplicable, No Answer, and Do Not Know/Cannot choose responses to focus on the discernible participant responses.

2.4 Respondent Demographics

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`summarise()` has grouped output by 'year'. You can override using the
`.groups` argument.
```

2.5 Graphs

Each variable regarded a factor that influencing job satisfaction succeeding the prompt "On the following list there are various aspects of jobs. Please circle one number to show how important you personally consider it is in a job:".

2.5.1 Helping Others

Figure # displays the proportion of responses after the prompt "A job that allows someone to help other people?" The "important" response option is consistently the most chosen response in years 1989, 1998 and 2006 while in 2016, the "Very Important" response option surpasses by one. There is a general increase trend for the "Very Important" responses across the years, conveying an increased preference for jobs that help other people. Further, there is a general decrease in "Neither" responses from 1989 - 2006 which is interrupted when there is a slight increase in 2016.

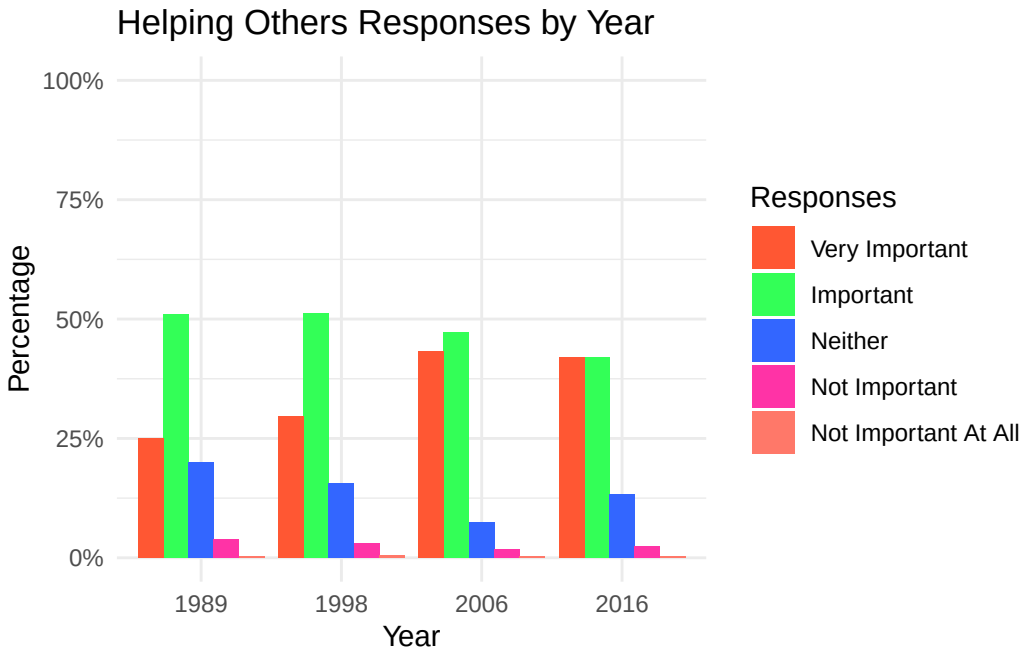

Figure 1: Q1 - "A job that allows someone to help other people?"

2.5.2 Interesting Work

Figure # displays the proportion of responses to a likert scale ranging from "Very Important" to "Not Important At All" after the prompt "An interesting job?".

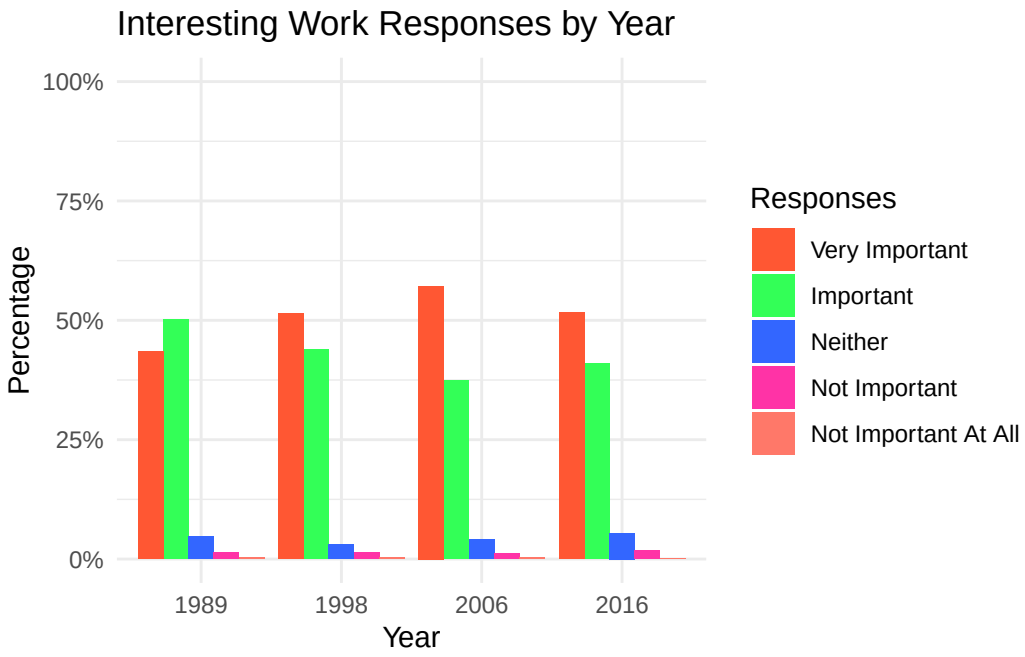

Figure 2: Q2 - "An interesting job?"

2.5.3 Social Usefulness

Figure 3 displays the proportion of responses after the prompt "A job that is useful to society?". Compared to the other figures, this graph has the most varying change in the "neutral" response. The "Very Important" responses increase significantly while the overall pattern of the other responses are decreasing.

3 Results

Table 2 summarizes the average of responses per year for each variable.

Table 4: Average of Responses by Year

Year	Helping Others	Interesting Work	Social Usefulness
1989	2.034	1.649	1.986
1998	1.932	1.550	1.939
2006	1.687	1.501	1.669
2016	1.767	1.577	1.675

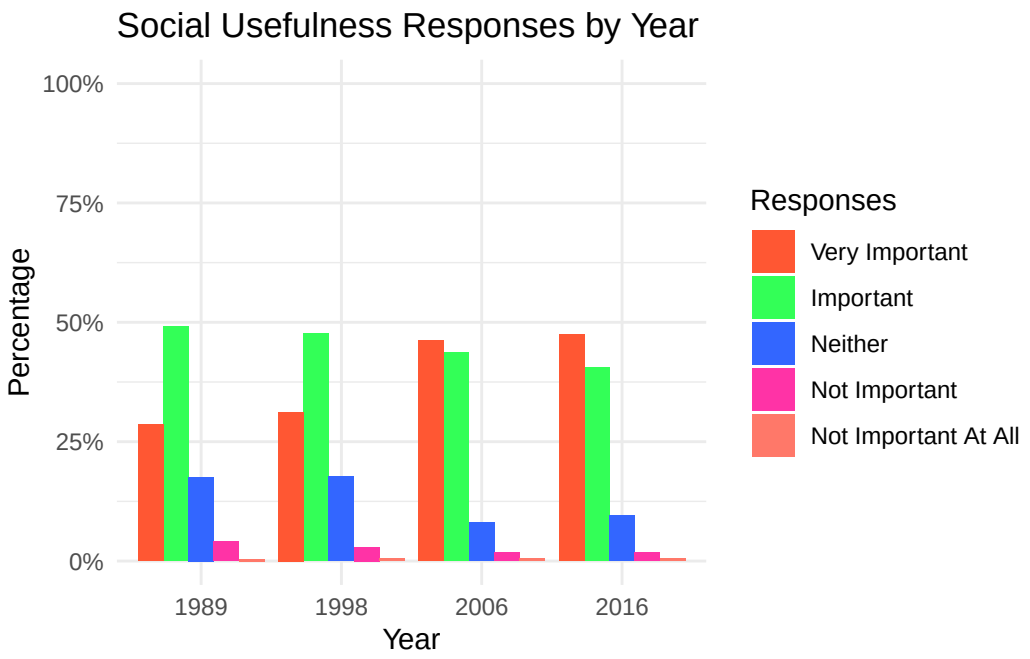

Figure 3: Q3 - "A job that is useful to society?"

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`summarise()` has grouped output by 'response'. You can override using the
`.groups` argument.
```

While all columns show a general increase in values, the Social Usefulness column is the only column that consistently conveys an increase.

4 Discussion

4.1 Gender?

4.2 Culture?

5 Sources

Table 5: Social Usefulness Reponse Proportions 2016

Response	Sex	Count	Percentage
very important	female	1228	57.09
very important	male	923	42.91
important	female	1389	55.90
important	male	1096	44.10
neither	female	339	47.68
neither	male	372	52.32
not important	female	67	46.53
not important	male	77	53.47
not important at all	female	14	48.28
not important at all	male	15	51.72