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Research Paper

For people about to join the workforce, it is not unusual to be anxious about life in the near future. In recent years, there have been countless news stories covering instances of people being extremely rude to service workers, mostly fast-food workers, which only makes them more concerned. These fast-food workers only get paid just over minimum wage, yet most people treat them disrespectfully. As a result, the people about to join the workforce become more worried about their future work environment, questioning if their situation will be as bad as those they see online. On top of that, there are many other factors to consider that could cause one's job to be miserable. Consequently, the choices these people make before joining the workforce, specifically their career choices, are crucial in determining if they will be happy in the near future. The question of how career choices affect happiness in life is an important one, and this is the subject of this investigation.

I deduced from multiple sources that one's personality can cause them to make certain career choices, which in turn will affect their happiness. For example, the type of work that one wants to do. Multiple studies from the sources of my investigation have found that healthcare workers that desire to help others are more likely to be satisfied with their life decisions. This inherently makes sense. If someone wants to help the environment, and they get a job that will enable them to, they will ultimately be happy because their work aligns with what they want to do. But even if your work lets you do what you want to do, you can still be unhappy. Jobs that

help the environment can be very fulfilling, but often do not pay much. To give an example, if you are a conservation scientist and doing what you love, but not earning enough money to help pay for your mortgage, car insurance, and other bills, you will be unhappy. Finding and getting a job that enables you to do what you want to do will satiate your desires and make your life fulfilling, but if it doesn't pay enough to support your lifestyle, you as a whole will be unhappy.

Other aspects of a job can impact happiness. In particular, the amount of time you spend working everyday. Being a hard worker is a good quality to have, but there is a point where it is too much. If you spend too many hours a week working, your overall health will suffer and your social life will suffer as well. Another good example is if your values don't agree with your company's practices. If you work at a company like Amazon that avoids taxes, abuses employees' rights, and impacts the environment negatively, that could lead to unhappiness. A job could be perfect for you but behind the scenes the company is benefitting at the expense of others. One more factor that might not come to the top of the head is the context that your job is in. A study conducted at a state agency found that the context factors matter way more than content factors in determining job satisfaction. That means that even if you have a job with a good income and many benefits, you could still be unhappy if, to give an example, you are at the bottom of the company's hierarchy. There are many other content and context factors other than the ones I named that can impact happiness. In addition, the respect and recognition that you get at your job will impact your happiness. For instance, jobs like janitors and waiters generally do not get much respect from the public. Let's say as a hypothetical you are a waiter at The French Laundry. Even though you are working at such a prestigious restaurant and you are probably earning a lot of money from tips alone, you could still be unhappy if your family members do not

respect what you do or you receive insults from rude customers. Different components of your work environment can impact your happiness.

You might be thinking that these career choices might not be that much of a "choice". Life can hit you hard and set you back. The state of the economy alone can heavily impact choice in career and as a result impact job satisfaction. From a study from one of my sources, it was found that most police women in Dubai, a city with lots of money, chose to become a police officer because they wanted to help people, while most police women in Taipei, a city with a not so much money, chose to become a police officer because of job security. If the economy is in a bad state, you would prefer a secure job over one that is prone to mass layoffs. And you would probably choose the secure one even if the work environment there is way worse and it pays less. Another factor that affects happiness completely out of your hands is your coworkers. Your fellow coworkers could make you happy or unhappy. If your coworkers are unpleasant, they could make every moment at work a living hell, while if they treat you well but your job is terrible, they could make work much more bearable. Many factors completely beyond your reach can influence your work environment and thereby influence your happiness. On top of that, there are other unreachable factors that can cause you to not have a job at all. With a little bit of luck things can go either way. For example, with bad luck, you could encounter many health problems or family problems that cause you to be unable to have a job. And with some good luck you could have enough money to not even have to work at all for the rest of your life. The randomness of life will find a way to drastically affect your happiness.

At the start of the paper, I stated that this paper will cover my investigation of the relationship between job satisfaction and career choices. The results that I found from various sources helped me make educated statements about how different choices can affect how happy a

person is. What I found was that different career paths will lead to different jobs, which will in turn impact happiness. For example, a career path that leads you to a job that lets you do what you love will make you happy, but at this job you as a whole could be unhappy if you don't earn much at this job. A different job that you earn a lot of money at could also make you unhappy if you work more than fifty hours a week. There are also other factors such as work environments and unethical business practices that no career choice can change. All in all, career choices do play a big factor in your happiness, but there are many other factors out of your reach that also do.

Works Cited

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