

The Relationship Between Gender and Job Satisfaction:
The Mediating Effect of Perceived Person-Organization Value Fit

Rucha Rane

Jenny H. Wang

Anna Zabinski

Georgia State University

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Job satisfaction is one of the major areas of research within Organizational Behavior and Human Resources (Sani, et al., 2016; Diestel, et al., 2014; Jutras & Mathieu, 2016). There has been great interest in identifying causal links between job satisfaction and other work-related variables such as employee competency (Sani, et al., 2016), social contexts (Diestel, et al., 2014), and leader-member exchange (Jutras & Mathieu, 2016). The following study adds an additional explanatory variable to the literature on job satisfaction, work-values and perceived value fit. In addition, the current study examines the role of gender in its relation to job satisfaction and perceived person-organization value fit. The purpose of this study is to answer the following questions: Do women have higher perceived organization value fit (OVF) and job satisfaction than men? A model is introduced with perceived person-organization value fit as a mediator between gender and job satisfaction.

What is Job Satisfaction?

Job satisfaction is defined as the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job because of achievement or facilitation of that achievement through job values (Locke, 1969). Additionally, it can be described as a function of both the amount of discrepancy between percept and value and the importance of that value to that individual. An individual's job satisfaction can be predicted and explained by an individual's specific goals (Locke, 1969). Every experience of satisfaction or dissatisfaction reflects a dual value judgment. Specifically, the degree of satisfaction is a function of the degree of value-percept discrepancy in conjunction with the relative importance of the value to the individual. Thus, the attributes of value, content, and intensity, are together involved in determining emotional reaction and must be considered of equal importance when explaining such reactions (Locke, 1969).

Work Values and Job Satisfaction

Work values have independent and significant effects on job satisfaction. Rewards are intervening variables between workers' degree of control and their job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is directly mediated by reward variables (Kalleberg, 1977). This would suggest a causal relationship between work value dimensions and job satisfaction where work values precede and influence job satisfaction.

Gender and Job Satisfaction

Findings have shown that women have higher job satisfaction than their male coworkers (Clark, 1997). This is a curious finding, especially considering the fact that women routinely make less than men for the same jobs (Mohan, 2014). One explanation for this phenomenon may be in Gender Role Theory (GRT). GRT posits that men and women have social imposed roles and attributes from birth. These different traits become adopted as a part of men and women as they get older, granted to varying degrees on a scale from traditional to nontraditional traits. Eagly and Steffan (1984) identified that even working women when compared to housewives had similar attributes. Suggesting that the culturally imposed traits become intrinsic. A following study found that female workers were more likely to perceive themselves and be perceived as helpful, communal, and sensitive (Eagly & Steffan, 1986). In the same study, male workers were more likely to perceive themselves and be perceived as ambitious, aggressive, dominant (Steffan, 1986). In all, these studies confirm that even as women enter nontraditional work roles, they still maintain and fulfill certain aspects and traits of more traditional gender roles, such as character traits. The total of female gender role traits suggest that women should be more inclined to serve

others and thus, be more minded of ethics and morals. Altogether, this suggests that work values will be more important to women because that concept has been culturally imposed upon them.

Thus, given the literature on job satisfaction, values, and gender, can we expect women to have higher perceived organization-value fit and job satisfaction? The hypotheses and proposed mediation model are illustrated below, *see Figure 1*.

H1: Females will perceive higher person-organization fit than males.

H2: Person-Organization Value Fit will be positively related to Job Satisfaction.

H3: Person-Organization Value Fit will mediate the relationship between gender and Job Satisfaction?

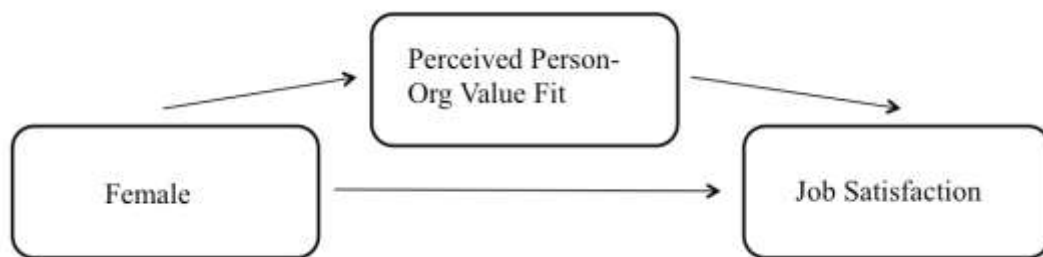


Figure 1. Proposed Mediation Model

Method

The data we used is an archival data set. The data were collected by Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN) from February to March in 2000. The data collection method consisted of surveys and follow-up focus group interviews. There are a total of 2,500 observations and 175 questions. This data is meant to be nationally representative of all working Canadians. The questions covered topics regarding work characteristics, employee health, and demographics. Not all of the respondents answered all the questions in the survey, so the sample size is slightly different for each question that we examined. The sample sizes for gender overall is 632, the sample size for job satisfaction is 630, and the sample size for organization value fit is

625. The sample size has almost an equal number of male and female participants, with 51.4% male participants and 48.6% female participants, *see Figure 2*.

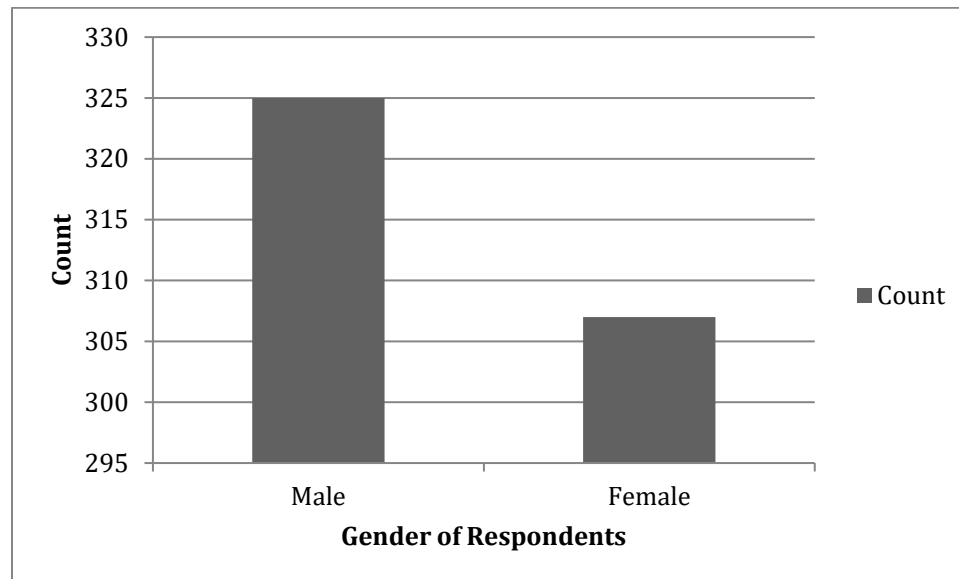


Figure 2. Gender of Respondents

Constructs

Job satisfaction. The question used to measure job satisfaction is: How satisfied are you with your job? This question is [Q58] in the original data set. Respondents answered on a 5-point Likert scale with responses ranging from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied).

Organization value fit. The question used to measure organization value fit is: Extent agree/disagree: “I find that my values and [my organization’s] values are similar.” This question is [Q61A] in the original data set. Respondents answered on a 5-point Likert scale with responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Results

The results from the survey questions indicate that most people are quite satisfied with their jobs and the data are left-skewed. Most people also find that their values and the organization's values are quite similar, but the results show that most people agree that their values are similar. For job satisfaction, the mean response was 3.88 with a standard deviation of 0.97, *see Figure 3a*. For organization value fit, the mean response was 3.63 with a standard deviation of 0.968, *see Figure 3b*.

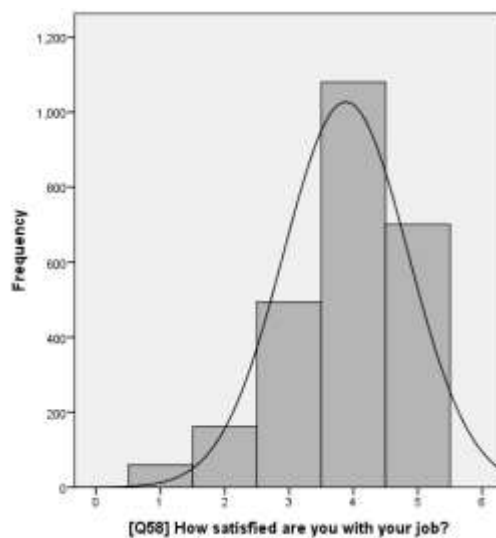


Figure 3a: Job Satisfaction

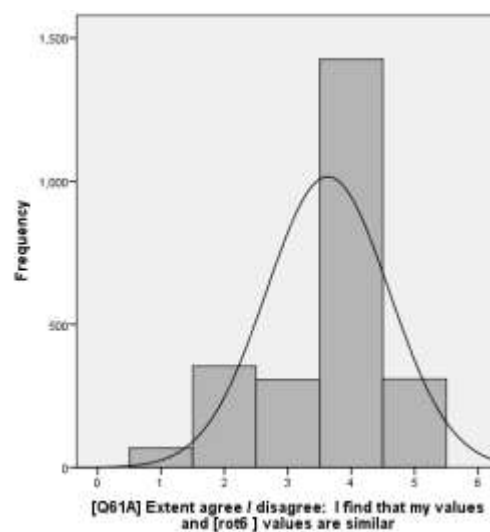


Figure 3b: OVF

Figure 3a-b. Survey Questions Response Distribution

The correlations show that there is a significant relationship between gender and job satisfaction as well as job satisfaction and values, *see Table 1*. Thus, we then tested these relationships using regression analysis.

Variable	M	SD	N	1	2	3
1. Gender	1.49	0.500	632	1	-	-
2. Job Satisfaction	3.48	1.084	630	0.027	1	-
3. Values	3.37	1.083	625	0.086*	0.410**	1

*p< .05, **p<.01

Table 1. Correlations Between Variables

A regression was run to test the “A Path” of the regression model between female gender and perceived OVF. This yielded a significant beta coefficient of .187 ($p = .031$, St. Error= .086). Then a secondary regression was run to test the “B Path” of the model between perceived person-OVF and job satisfaction. Controlling for gender, the regression yielded a significant beta coefficient of .412 ($p = .001$, St. Error= .037). The direct effect between gender and job satisfaction was insignificant ($\beta = .058$, $p > .10$). Further analysis was conducted using a Sobel Test, *see Figure 5*. This type of analysis tests whether or not perceived person-OVF carries the influence of ‘female’ to job satisfaction. The test produced a critical ratio indicating that the indirect effect of ‘female’ on job satisfaction via the mediator of person-OVF is significantly different from zero ($A*B = 2.16$, $p = .031$, St. Error= .036). This is a full mediation model.

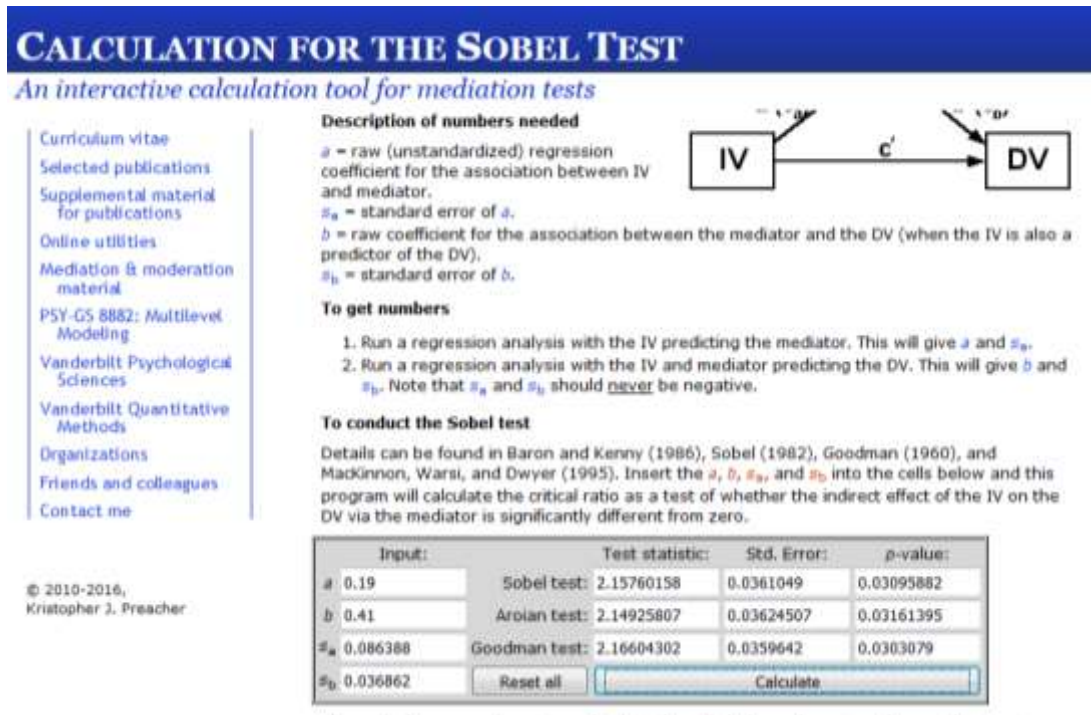


Figure 5. Sobel Test Calculator

All of the hypotheses were supported. The initial regression test for the A path of the model supported hypothesis 1; females will perceive higher person-OVF than males. The second regression test for the B path of the model supported hypothesis 2; person-OVF will be positively related to job satisfaction. Finally, the Sobel Test revealed that perceived-OVF fully mediates the relationship between gender and job satisfaction, supporting hypothesis 3; Person-OVF will mediate the relationship between gender and Job Satisfaction. Importantly, the direct effect was found to be insignificant. This is a fully mediated model, *see Figure 5*.

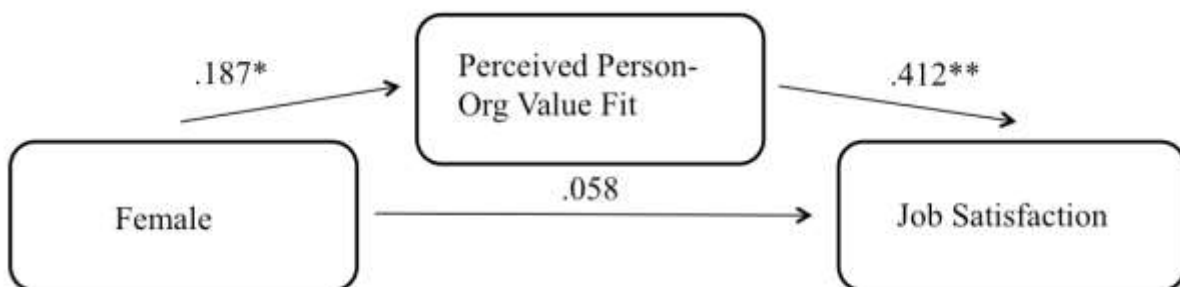


Figure 6. Mediation Model A and B Path Regression Results

This study was not without limitations. The primary limitation was that the constructs for job satisfaction and perceived person-OVF were captured using single measures. This was the result of using archival data that did not consider collecting multiple measures for the same construct.

Future research should continue focusing on the determinants of job satisfaction. This should be done in three ways. First, it is important to understand what kinds of people have different values toward work. Variation in work values may be hypothesized to result from three major sets of social factors: (1) socialization and other types of life experiences which have occurred prior to the individual's entry into the labor force and which has shaped one's view of the importance of the various dimensions of work; (2) nonwork social roles which have imposed constraints and contingencies on the types of meanings that the individual could seek from the work activity; (3) work experiences which could affect the mature (Kalleberg, 1977). Second, it is important to understand the mechanisms by which job rewards are distributed among various social groups (Kalleberg, 1977). Third, the relationship of job characteristics, job rewards and job satisfaction to occupational categories and occupational ranking systems (e.g., prestige and socio- economic scales) needs to be examined (Kalleberg, 1977). Therefore, specific suggested research questions stemming from this study include answering do women self select out of jobs that do not match their perceived- OVF? Additionally, what specific values are considered?

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