

JOB SATISFACTION AND GENDER IDENTITY OF WOMEN MANAGERS AND NON-MANAGERS

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Abstract

Objectives: This work investigates different cognitive aspects of job satisfaction (co-workers, supervisor, job content, working facilities, organization and management, opportunities for development, income), positive and negative affect at work and their relations to gender role orientation of women occupying managerial and non-managerial positions. **Materials and methods:** The sample of 122 women (60 managers and 62 non-managers) completed a battery of instruments such as: the Bem Sex Role Inventory, the Job Description Inventory by Neuberger and Allerbeck and the Job Affect Scale by Brief et al. **Results:** Most women managers represented androgynous and masculine types, while women non-managers belonged to androgynous and feminine types. Moreover, women with various degrees of sex-typing showed positive and negative affect at work. The most satisfied with income were masculine women managers, the least — feminine women non-managers. **Conclusions:** These results may be applied in designing of motivational instruments to enhance job effectiveness and to eliminate unproductive behaviours such as absenteeism, high staff turnover.

Key words:

Job satisfaction, Gender role, Women managers and women non-managers, Positive and negative affect at work

INTRODUCTION

In recent years the participation of women in the labour market has eventually destroyed the notion that women are a peripheral part of the labour force. Women want to take up senior positions, earn more money and be equal partners in negotiations. At the same time Lyness and Thompson [1] found that females were less satisfied with jobs than similarly placed males. Furthermore in a study of Fortune 500 companies, women more often than men left their managerial positions over a two-year period [2]. The proposed explanation for women's turnover considered their dissatisfaction with the role in the company rather than family issues [3]. Thus, the purpose of the present research is to examine the job satisfaction of women (both cognitive and emotional facets) in relation to their gender role orientation and job positions.

Job satisfaction is defined as an internal state that is expressed by cognitively and/or affectively evaluating an

experienced job [4]. In the definition mentioned above it is important to note the presence of both affect (emotional state) and cognition (appraisal). Thus, Brief [4] consistent with Locke [5], postulates that job satisfaction stems from the interplay of thoughts and feelings, or cognitive and emotional facets. In this study, as well as others [6], both cognition and affect contribute to job satisfaction. Emotional aspect of job satisfaction is conceptualized and measured not as a single dimension, but as positive and negative affect at work demonstrated independently [4]. In turn, cognitive aspect of job satisfaction assesses global satisfaction with a job and/or satisfaction with several key aspects. The most common classification of facets considers five elements: co-workers, supervision, the work itself (intrinsic factors) and finally pay, and promotion (extrinsic factors). Nevertheless, Locke [5] adds new ones such as: working conditions, company and management, recognition [7]. However, Neuberger and Allerbeck [8], whose

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inventory was applied in this study, suggest to measure satisfaction with respect to seven different components, namely: co-workers, supervision, job content, working facilities, organization and management, opportunities for development and income (wage and salary).

Many theories have been proposed analysing the causes of job satisfaction. They can be grouped into four categories: situational theories, dispositional approaches, interactive theories, and transactional model of quality of life [6–7]. Situational theories hypothesize that job satisfaction results from various aspects of the environment or the specificity of one's profession; examples are Herzberg's two-factor theory, and the job characteristics model by Hackman and Oldham. Dispositional approaches assume that job satisfaction is rooted in the personological characteristics. Interactive theories propose that job satisfaction stems from the interplay of the situation and personality; the example is the person-environment fit in accordance with Holland [7]. Eventually the transactional model of quality of life by Zalewska [6] combines the three described approaches to job satisfaction. This study explores the effect of gender role orientation and job positions on women's job satisfaction. Therefore, it can be assumed that this aim associates with interactive attitudes to job satisfaction.

Gender role and sex role are two terms often applied by scientists interchangeably [9], but in this text the concept of gender role is used to refer to the specific expectations of a particular society about people's behaviours, thoughts and feelings. Bem [10] challenges the view of masculinity and femininity as opposite ends of the same continuum and supposes that masculinity and femininity are separate continuums, allowing individuals to endorse both characteristics. According to this theory, sex-typed, gender schematic women and men have developed a strong role identification that has guided them to develop and display the diverse traits and behaviours expected of their gender according to their society's expectations. Moreover, gender serves as an organizing principle for masculine men and feminine women that they use in processing information about themselves and the external world. Non-sex-typed women and men,

described as gender aschematic, are relatively immune to the influences of gender stereotypes with respect to themselves and to others [10–11]. People's degree of sex-typing is estimated by the use of the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI). Men and women with approximately equal scores on the Masculinity and Femininity scales, are identified as non-sex-typed or gender aschematic. This category includes both androgynous individuals (high scores on both scales) and undifferentiated individuals (low scores on both scales). Those with unequal scores, with the imbalance displayed in the stereotypic direction (masculine men, feminine women), are identified as sex-typed or gender schematic. Finally, men and women with unequal scores in the counterstereotypic direction are identified as cross-sex-typed (masculine women, feminine men).

OBJECTIVES

Social role theorists report that because sex stereotypes derive from the traditional labour divisions, sex becomes a set of role expectations that people generalize across a variety of social situations [12]. The results are termed "sex-role spillover". Even when a female is advanced to a management position, her career is likely to differ from male colleagues in ways that reflect sex-role spillover. Sex-spillover may affect women's career permanence and job satisfaction. Lyness and Thompson [1] write about women who are less satisfied than men. Clark's [13] study of gender differences in job satisfaction in Britain indicates females to have greater levels of satisfaction, despite being in jobs with lower earnings and promotion opportunities. In contrast to Clark's [13] findings, Donohue and Heywood [14] state no gender job satisfaction gap.

Nonetheless, since 1970's, women have increased the participation in the labour force and executive positions. It has led to changes in gender role attitudes and stereotypes in society. In more recent years there is evidence that the mentioned changes have been stronger for women than for men and work and family roles have not changed nearly as much for men as they have for women. Therefore, it is expected that job attributes (especially on the

executive level) linked with the masculine gender role will show increasing importance to women, thus giving rise to the question of preferable gender role identity of women managers and non-managers.

Moreover, an interesting issue is associated with job satisfaction (both emotional and cognitive aspects) of women managers and non-managers in relation to gender role.

Schuttenberg, O'Dell, and Kaczala [15] have examined job satisfaction among 200 principals, 200 counsellors, and 200 teachers (both women and men) and report that androgynous respondents tend to possess higher levels of job satisfaction. Eichinger, Heifetz, and Ingraham [16] also state that androgynous orientation among female teachers is related to greater job satisfaction and reduced job stress. Nevertheless, in a study of 40 male and 40 female high school teachers, Ushasree, Seshu Reddy, and Vinolya [17] find contradictory results that androgynous and masculine teachers reveal the highest job stress and no significant differences in job satisfaction.

Considering findings that are generally focused on discrepancies between men and women, several questions referring only to women managers and non-managers were asked:

1. What is gender identity of women occupying managerial and non-managerial positions?
2. What are differences in cognitive aspects of job satisfaction among androgynous women, masculine women, feminine women and undifferentiated women?
3. What are differences in emotional aspects of job satisfaction among androgynous women, masculine women, feminine women and undifferentiated women?
4. What are differences in both cognitive and emotional aspects of job satisfaction among women managers and non-managers?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

One-hundred-twenty-two women were recruited to participate in the present study, sixty ones occupying managerial, and sixty-two ones non-managerial (i.e. administrative job) positions. Females were representatives of trade corporations. Both groups ranged in age from 24 to 50 years,

with a mean age of 36 years. The average job position tenure was 2 years (for women managers) and 2.5 years (for women non-managers). Most of participants (managers and non-managers) were married and had a university-level education.

The degree of sex-typing was estimated by the Polish adaptation of Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) and its psychometric study by Kuczyńska [18]. The BSRI consists of 15 adjectives describing masculinity characteristics, 15 adjectives describing feminine personality characteristics, and 5 adjectives describing neutral characteristics. Kuder-Richardson's coefficient ranges from 0.78 (for the Masculinity scale) to 0.79 (for the Femininity scale).

To measure the cognitive aspect of job satisfaction, the Job Description Survey by Neuberger and Allerbeck in the Polish adaptation by Zalewska [19] was used. The questionnaire measures satisfaction with respect to different components of employees' overall job satisfaction, namely co-workers, supervisor, job content, working facilities, organization and management, opportunities for development, income. Coefficient alpha ranges from 0.67 to 0.92. Finally, positive and negative affect at work (the emotional facet of job satisfaction) was evaluated using the Polish translation of the Job Affect Scale (JAS) by Brief et al. [20]. The JAS is composed of 20 hypothesized clear markers of positive and negative affect at work. Ten items are markers of negative affect and another 10 items are markers of positive affect. Coefficient alpha for positive affect equals 0.84 and for negative affect it equals 0.79.

RESULTS

Gender identity and job position of women

The results in Figure 1 show that gender role orientation is related to job position of women (Chi-square test (3) = 14.8, $p = 0.002$ Cramer's $V = 0.35$). Participants are classified as androgynous, sex-typed, cross-sex-typed, and undifferentiated based on their results on the masculine and feminine dimensions of the BSRI. Most women managers represent androgynous (48.3%) and masculine types (20%), while women non-managers belong to androgynous (48.4%) and feminine types (35.5%).

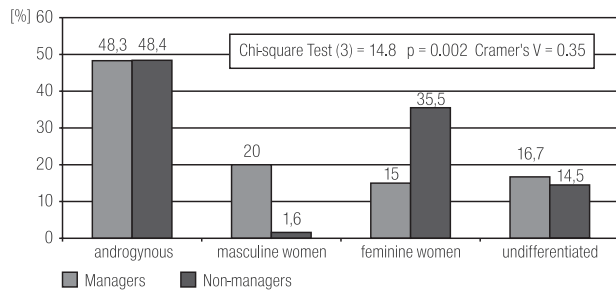


Fig. 1. Gender identity of women occupying managerial and non-managerial positions (N = 122).

Gender identity and cognitive aspect of job satisfaction of women

To explore the impact of gender role orientation on job satisfaction of women, a one-way between-groups analysis of variance was used. The scores are presented in Tables 1–2. The one-way ANOVA indicates that the groups mentioned above do not differ significantly on their levels of satisfaction with co-workers [F(3,118) = 0.97, p = 0.41], supervision [F(3,118) = 0.43, p = 0.73], job content [F(3,118) = 0.39, p = 0.76], working facilities [F(3,118) = 1.08, p = 0.36], organization and management [F(3,118) = 1.44, p = 0.24], opportunities for development [F(3,118) = 0.1, p = 0.96], income [F(3,118) = 1.61, p = 0.19], and even the overall result [F(3,118) = 1.57, p = 0.2].

Gender identity and emotional aspect of job satisfaction of women

The one-way ANOVA was also applied to estimate the effect of gender identity on emotional aspect of job

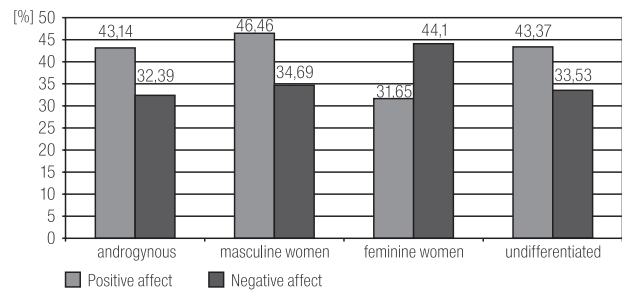


Fig. 2. Gender identity of women and positive [F(3,118) = 25.7, p < 0.0001] and negative affect at work [F(3,118) = 23.3, p < 0.0001], (N = 122).

satisfaction (both positive and negative affectivity), (see Figure 2). Results demonstrate that females (androgynous, sex-typed, cross-sex-typed and undifferentiated) differ on their display of positive affect at work [F(3,118) = 25.7, p < 0.0001], and negative affect at work [F(3,118) = 23.3, p < 0.0001]. The strongest positive affect refers to masculine women (M = 46.46). The strongest negative affect refers to feminine women (M = 44.1).

Gender identity and job satisfaction of women occupying managerial and non-managerial positions

The two-way ANOVA was conducted to determine the interplay of gender role orientation and job position of women on their thoughts and feelings about work (see Figures 3–4). Significant differences appear only in one facet of the cognitive aspect of job satisfaction i.e. Income [F(3,118) = 3.00, p = 0.033] and one facet of the emotional aspect of job satisfaction i.e. Negative affect [F(3,118) = 3.17, p = 0.027]. The most satisfied with income are masculine women mana-

Table 1. Gender identity and women’s satisfaction with co-workers, supervision, job content, working facilities (N = 122)

Results of ANOVA	Co-workers	Supervision	Job content	Working facilities
F(3) sig.	0.97 ns	0.43 ns	0.39 ns	1.08 ns

ns — nonsignificant.

Table 2. Gender identity and women’s satisfaction with organization, opportunities for development, income and overall result (N = 122)

Results of ANOVA	Organization	Opportunities for development	Income	Overall result
F(3) sig.	1.44 ns	0.1 ns	1.61 ns	1.57 ns

ns — nonsignificant.

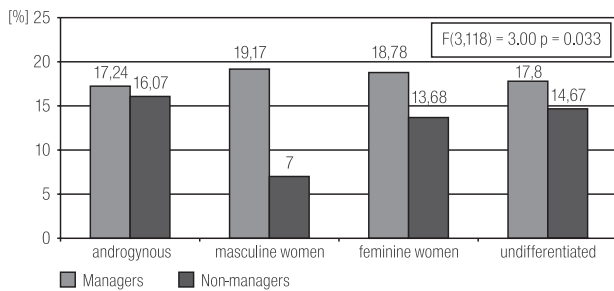


Fig. 3. Gender identity and satisfaction with salary of women (M) occupying managerial and non-managerial positions (N = 122).

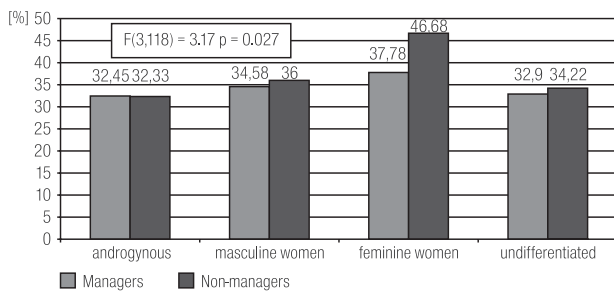


Fig. 4. Gender identity and negative affect at work of women (M) occupying managerial and non-managerial positions (N = 122).

gers (M = 19.17), the least satisfied are feminine (M = 13.68) and masculine (M = 7.0) women non-managers. The work is perceived in negative terms, leading to self-recrimination, distress and dissatisfaction, by feminine women non-managers (M = 46.68).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Understanding the dynamics of women managers and non-managers' satisfaction is important because their attitudes impact both individual and organizational outcomes. More satisfied women managers develop more positive relationships with their subordinates, and may develop a work culture that is both pleasant and effective in motivating high performance. Moreover, since job satisfaction affects absenteeism and turnover, keeping women managers and non-managers satisfied keeps costs down for organizations.

The general purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between gender schema theory and job satisfaction of women managers and non-managers. As predicted,

most women managers represent masculine and androgynous types, in turn women non-managers represent androgynous and feminine types. This is consistent with the findings of Strykowska [21] that women occupying managerial jobs differ from those who occupy non-managerial positions in the masculine rather than the androgynous type. One explanation for these results is that structural factors determine gender differences in personality, skills and behaviours. Social changes should lead to changes in gender stereotypes and corresponding sex differences [22]. If women are full-time employed in jobs that demanded "masculine" traits (like the executive levels) such as ambition, assertiveness, decisiveness, gender stereotypes of women appear to become more agentic. Androgynous women, who possess a combination of masculine and feminine traits, are able to respond appropriately across a variety of settings. Therefore, both managers and non-managers prefer this type of psychological gender with comparable frequency.

Moreover, while analysing the relationship between job satisfaction and gender role, differences are found only in emotional aspect of job satisfaction (what they feel at work, not what they think of work). The strongest positive affect refers to masculine women. Thus, these results confirm that masculine orientation is more closely related to psychological well-being of women than androgynous orientation [23]. Nonetheless, future research should investigate why differences in job satisfaction among androgynous women, masculine women, feminine women and undifferentiated women are linked only to affective experiences and not job beliefs, although a recent study reveals that affect and cognition are strongly related to job satisfaction and the relative effects are exactly the same [6,24].

Eventually, this research demonstrates the effect of the interplay of gender role orientation and job positions on women's job satisfaction. The two-way ANOVA shows significant differences only in one facet of the cognitive and emotional aspect of job satisfaction. The most satisfied with income are masculine women managers, who occupy more valued positions with better economic and social rewards. The strongest negative affect refers to feminine women non-managers, because organizations very often

underutilize their skills and abilities, overload their interpersonal duties, and reward them less economically. In the face of two significant results, it can be concluded that the job position seems to remain a weak modifying variable between job satisfaction and gender identity.

It is disturbing that there appears so little interest in the concept from practitioners. Perhaps enhancing of positive and reduction of negative affect at work, made possible by practical implementation of gender role theory, may serve as the basis for the development of suitable motivational instruments, other than but also including the simple raise of salary.

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