

Investigating the Relationship between Self-Leadership Strategies and Job Satisfaction

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Abstract *The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between self-leadership strategies and job satisfaction. The study took place at an educational organization in Isfahan. A random sample of 164 employees was selected. This research was conducted using two separate questionnaires. Self-leadership was assessed using a standard questionnaire (Houghton and Neck, 2002). This Questionnaire uses 35 questions to measure the three subscales. For job satisfaction based on Weiss et al. (1967) and Eskildsen et al. (2010) has been developed a questionnaire with three subscales. Structural equation modeling was conducted to test the hypotheses. The finding showed that the "behavior focused strategies", "natural reward strategies" and "constructive thought pattern strategies" (with a significant coefficient at 0.61, 0.59 and 0.63) had a significant effect on job satisfaction and self-leadership influences on job satisfaction with a significant path coefficient at 0.73. The result of this study showed that self-leadership can be considered as a predictor of job satisfaction.*

Key words Job satisfaction, Self-leadership, Behavior focused strategies, Natural reward strategies, Constructive thought pattern strategies

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1. Introduction

In new management theory, employee satisfaction is assumed one of the most important drivers of quality and productivity. Numerous studies discuss the effects of employee satisfaction on company performance (Matzler et al., 2004). Satisfied employees are highly motivated, have good work morale, and work more effectively and efficiently (Eskildsen and Dahlgaard, 2000; Martensen and Gronholdt, 2001). Employee satisfaction has many outcomes like customer satisfaction (Jeon and Choi, 2012; Pantouvakis and Bouranta, 2013). Satisfied employees deliver high service quality (Heskett et al., 1994).

Over the last few years, a variety of studies for the causes and effects of the job satisfaction have been conducted (Park and Kim, 2009). Job Satisfaction has been widely studied in organizational research. From a managerial perspective, it is crucial to know what factors influence employee satisfaction (Matzler et al., 2004). One of this factors that effects on employee satisfaction is self-leadership. Self-leadership is an intuitive and strategic performance towards self-development that provides lifelong tools in order to have more access to internal and external resources. This process roots from the proved rule that human being only uses a small part of his/her brain and self-leadership, by using increased self-awareness, concentration and support which enable him/her to gain higher potentiality (Topper, 2009). The purpose of this paper is investigating the relationship between self-leadership and job satisfaction.

2. Job satisfaction

As a global construct, job satisfaction can be defined as the feelings an employee has about the job in general as well as satisfaction with specific aspects, such as supervision, pay, opportunity for advancement, and morale (McNeese-Smith, 1997; Kangas et al., 1999; Park and Kim, 2009). Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as a pleasurable, emotional state resulting from the self-appraisal of one's job or job experiences. Based on Spector (1997) job satisfaction is the extent to which people like or dislike their jobs.

In the field of job satisfaction different constructs can be divided among five main groups of characteristics of the job and work environment as follows (Eskildsen et al., 2010, pp.370-371):

(1) Organizational image. This area focuses on the perception of the organization in general and thus the effectiveness of the organization's employees branding initiatives.

(2) Organizational vision. This area focuses on the cultural/ethical aspects of the organization, the ability of corporate management to make sound decisions as well as to inform the employees about the state and direction of the organization.

(3) Superiors. This area focuses on the relationship that the employee has to the immediate manager i.e. the perceived professional and leadership skills of the manager.

(4) Co-workers. This area focuses on the social climate among the co-workers, the degree of professional cooperation as well as the sense of social belonging.

(5) Conditions of work. This area focuses on the job content, the physical work environment, job security, and the pay and benefit package, in other words all of the aspects of the job itself when perceived as isolated from the social and cultural context.

3. Self-leadership

Self-leadership is defined as a process by which people lead and motivate themselves in order to behave in a desired route and perform their tasks (Neck and Manz, 2006). Self-leadership includes three major strategies (Neck et al., 1997; Manz and Sims, 1980; Manz, 1983; Manz, 1986; Manz, 1992; Neck et al., 2003; Houghton and Yoho, 2005; Manz and Neck, 2004; Houghton et al., 2004; D'Intino et al., 2007): behavior focused strategies, natural reward strategies and constructive thought pattern strategies

Behavior focused strategies: these strategies try to assist individuals to improve their self-awareness. These strategies include self-observation, self-goal setting, self-reward or self-punishment and self-cueing.

Natural reward strategies: the goal of natural reward strategies is to create situations in which a person is inherently motivated by its pleasurable aspects.

Constructive thought pattern strategies: self-leadership suggests that staff can affect themselves by applying particular cognitive strategies. These strategies are divided into three categories as follows: self-talk; mental imagery and beliefs and assumptions.

Shahin and Salehzadeh (2013) have developed a comprehensive model for self-leadership and its applications. This model has been displayed in Figure 1.

4. Methodology of research

This paper used an empirical research design by questionnaire survey method to test the research hypothesis. The study took place at an educational organization in Isfahan. A random sample of 180 employees was selected and 180 questionnaires were distributed, of which 164 were yielded completed. This research was conducted using two separate instruments. The instruments were completed using a self-report method. Self-leadership was assessed using a standard questionnaire (Houghton and Neck, 2002). This Questionnaire uses 35 questions to measure the three subscales. For job satisfaction based on Weiss et al. (1967) and Eskildsen et al. (2010) has been developed a questionnaire with three subscales: compensation (three items); feeling about the job (four items) and organizational climate (six items).

The reliability of these questionnaires has been found to be satisfactory (0.83 and 0.79). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was conducted to test the hypotheses and to examine the relationships between the self-leadership and job satisfaction. We relied on several statistics to evaluate the goodness-of-fit of the models that includes CMIN/df, RMSEA, CFI, NFI, NNFI and GFI. Two statistical programs, SPSS 18 and Amos 18, were utilized to conduct the data analyses. The conceptual model has been displayed in Figure 2.

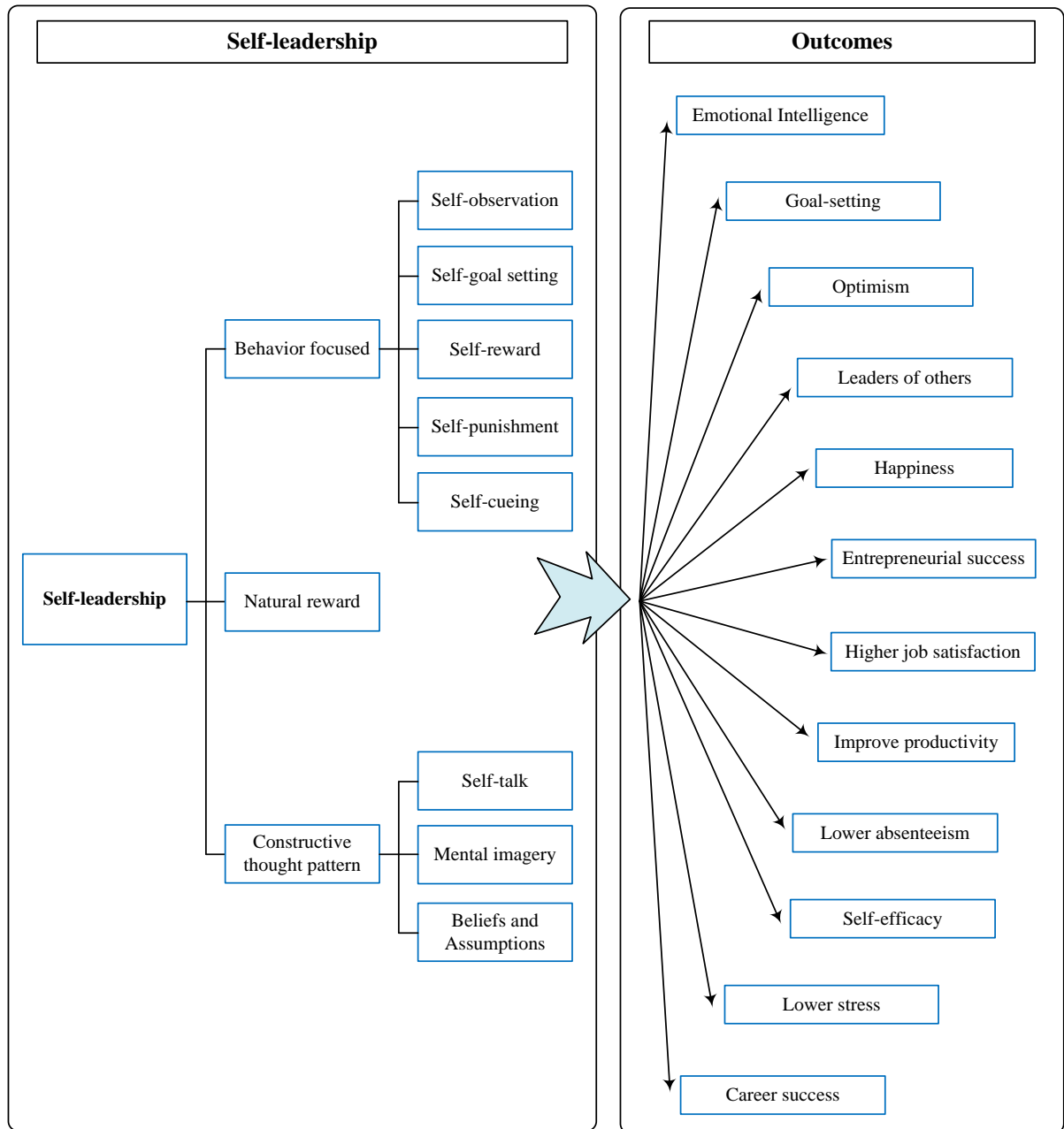


Figure 1. Self-leadership (Shahin and Salehzadeh, 2013)

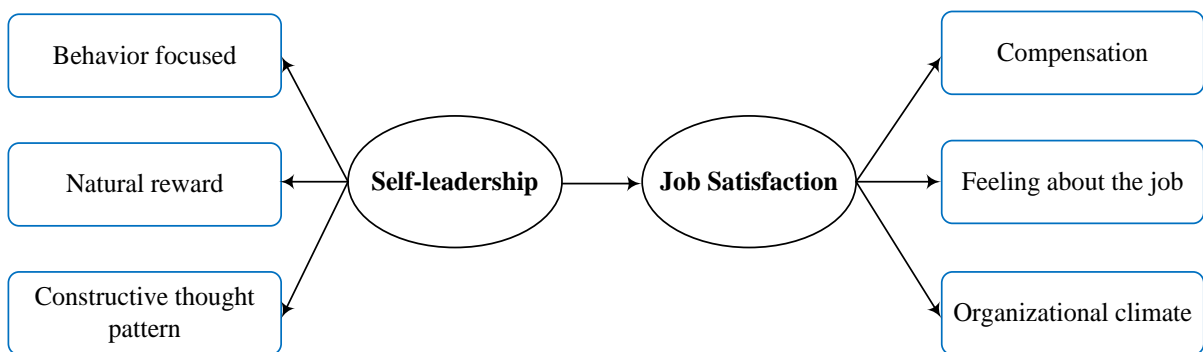


Figure 2. Conceptual framework

Hence, hypotheses are formulated as follow:

H1: Self-leadership has a positive impact on job satisfaction.

In addition, sub-hypotheses are:

H2: Behavior focused strategies has a positive impact on job satisfaction.

H3: Natural reward strategies have a positive impact on job satisfaction.

H4: Constructive thought pattern strategies have a positive impact on job satisfaction.

5. Results

First, measurement models were separately analyzed. Fit indices of the measurement models have been displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Fit indices of the measurement models

RMSEA	CFI	NFI	NNFI	GFI	CMIN/df	Model
0.072	0.936	0.908	0.971	0.901	1.29	Self-leadership
0.026	0.979	0.913	0.964	0.925	1.73	Job satisfaction
<10%	>90%	>90%	>90%	>90%	<3	Suitable fit

As you can see in Table 1, these indices meet all of the selected criteria and suggest that, overall fit of the measurement models is reasonable and acceptable.

Hypotheses testing

For testing the sub-hypotheses two indices, named CR and P are used. If CR>1.96 then in the significance level of 0.05 are confirmed the hypotheses. In Table 2, the sub-hypotheses and regression coefficients have been displayed.

Table 2. Sub-hypotheses and regression coefficients

Result	P	CR	Regression coefficients	Hypothesis
Confirmed	0.01	2.48	0.61	Behavior focused has a positive impact on job satisfaction
Confirmed	0.03	4.67	0.59	Natural reward has a positive impact on job satisfaction
Confirmed	0.001	3.85	0.63	Constructive thought pattern has a positive impact on job satisfaction

SEM has been used for testing the main hypothesis of research. The fit indices of the structural model were reported in Table 3.

Table 3. Fit indices of the structural model

RMSEA	CFI	NFI	NNFI	GFI	CMIN/df	Model
0.062	0.952	0.919	0.905	0.936	1.74	structural
<10%	>90%	>90%	>90%	>90%	<3	Suitable fit

In Table 4, the main hypothesis of research and regression coefficient has been displayed.

Table 4. Main hypothesis of research and regression coefficient

Result	P	CR	Regression coefficients	Hypothesis
Confirmed	0.001	3.542	0.73	Self-leadership has a positive impact on job satisfaction

As Table 4 shows self-leadership has a strong influence on job satisfaction with a significant path coefficient at 0.73.

6. Conclusion

Job Satisfaction has been widely studied in organizational research. One of factors that effects on employee satisfaction is self-leadership. The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between self-leadership and job satisfaction. The study took place at an educational organization in Isfahan. The finding showed that the “behavior focused strategies”, “natural reward strategies” and “constructive thought pattern strategies” (with a significant coefficient at 0.61, 0.59 and 0.63) had a significant effect on job satisfaction and self-leadership influences on job satisfaction with a significant path coefficient at 0.73. The findings showed that self-leadership can be considered as a predictor of job satisfaction. The results of this study state that having self-leadership characteristic can influence on enhancing the job satisfaction so training the self-leadership skills for employees is a good way to increase their satisfaction.

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