

**THE EFFECT OF EXTRACURRICULAR, EMPLOYER-HELD
SOCIAL FUNCTIONS ON EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION**

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ABSTRACT

Using data from a technology firm, I assessed the relationship between the extracurricular social demands of the employer, an employee's desire for social attachment to the workplace, and an employee's job satisfaction. Employees in the firm were interviewed to generate qualitative archetypes of employees with different levels of desire for social attachment to the workplace. Employees were then placed into two experimental conditions in which the social demands of the employer were manipulated. Afterwards, analyses were conducted to determine whether desire for social attachment to the workplace is dispositional and whether it moderates employee job satisfaction.

THE EFFECT OF EXTRACURRICULAR, EMPLOYER-HELD SOCIAL FUNCTIONS ON EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION

Employers often hold semi-mandatory social functions for their employees after work hours in order to boost employee morale. Employees are invited to an event that occupies several hours outside of the work day so that they may converse and socialize with their coworkers. Do these gatherings have the intended, positive effect on an employee's job satisfaction, or do employees resent being forced to spend additional hours in their role as an employee? What determines whether these events increase an employee's job satisfaction?

The answers to these questions are not immediately obvious, as some people appear to like to socialize with their coworkers more than others. To investigate this, I interviewed thirty-four employees at Telecorp, a technology company. Following the interviews, I conducted a field experiment on Telecorp employees.¹

RESULTS OF FIELD INTERVIEWS

I conducted thirty-four ethnographic interviews at Telecorp with both rank-and-file software developers and their team leaders in order to understand the role that extracurricular employer-sponsored social activities have played in the lives of the employees. There were essentially three archetypes of employees that I found at Telecorp, which I have characterized using an approach reminiscent of Elsbach & Dramer (2003), and portrayed as vignettes. To avoid evoking gender stereotypes, each of the vignettes will feature a man. However, they could just as easily feature people of both genders. The three archetypes are the family man, the bare-apartment bachelor, and the

¹ The previously interviewed employees were excluded from the field study.

work-life balancer. In each case, I will describe how the employee reacted to being invited to a corporate barbeque.

The family man. John has been an employee of Telecorp for five years. A married man with two small children, John looks forward to coming home from work every day at 6 p.m. and enjoying his wife's fine vegetarian cuisine. While daydreaming of home, John suddenly received an e-mail from his boss: "Come one, come all to the Telecorp BBQ—Thursday after 6:00." Upon receiving the invitation, John contemplated whether or not he should attend. While the veggie burgers would probably not be as tasty as the mapo tofu his family had planned to prepare that evening, John realized that the event might be a good opportunity for catching up with colleagues. John's boss thought that the event would be a welcome treat for his staff; he did not realize that attending the event might be a hardship for John.

The bare-apartment bachelor. Jim has been at Telecorp for a decade and has few social connections outside of work. Unmarried and with no children, Jim's work is his life. Upon receiving an e-mail from his boss inviting him to the Telecorp barbeque, Jim was elated. Over his tenure at Telecorp, Jim has grown to like his fellow employees. While he rarely socializes with people outside of work, he relishes the chance to enjoy some free food in the company of the people that he spent so much of his life working amongst. As Jim had no alternate plans for the evening of the barbeque, attending it was a natural choice for him.

The work-life balancer. Jake, a recently married man, has been at Telecorp for three years. Having grown up in the region, he often spends Sunday afternoons watching

football games with his old high school chums. While Jake likes to be home at a reasonable hour so that he can eat dinner with his wife, he also really enjoys the company of his coworkers, and on occasion will go out after work with them for a beer. His wife is understanding of his desire to spend time with his coworkers, and feels that doing so is important for him. Upon receiving the invitation to the barbeque, Jake thought about whether he wanted to attend for a few minutes, and then called his wife to ask if she would mind if he went.

THE MODEL

From these three vignettes, it is clear that the degree to which an employer-held social function increases job satisfaction in a firm may be related to the distribution of Johns, Jims, and Jakes within a firm. In order to determine the effect that semi-obligatory events have on job satisfaction, we must measure job satisfaction at the employee level and place different groups of employees in situations that have different degrees of semi-obligatory extracurricular demands. As the vignettes suggest that an employee's reaction to the extracurricular demands of the employer is moderated by the employee's desire for social attachment to the workplace, it is essential to measure this as well. I theorize that desire for social attachment to the workplace is dispositional; its level exists independent of the actions of the company and is relatively invariant over time.

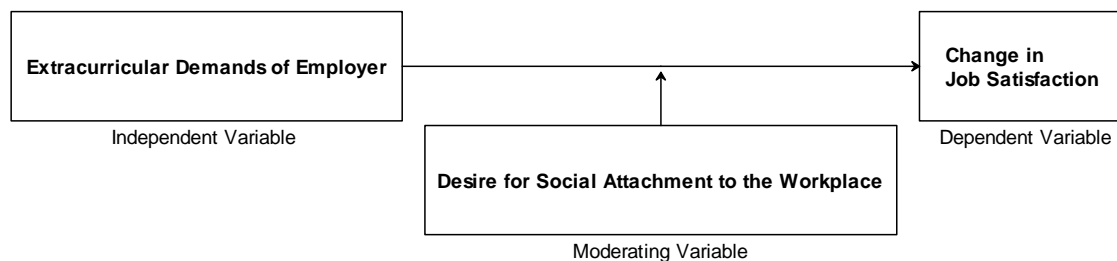


Figure 1: The Relationship between the Extracurricular Demands of the Employer and Job satisfaction

Hypotheses

This paper will attempt to test the nature of the link between extracurricular demands of the employer and an employee's job satisfaction. The model proposed above suggests that job satisfaction is not directly related to the extracurricular demands of the employer, but is instead moderated by the desire for social attachment to the workplace of the employee in question. The family man archetype has a low desire for social

attachment to the workplace, while the bare-apartment bachelor archetype has a high desire for social attachment to the workplace, and the work-life balancer resides somewhere in between. To uncover these associations, I will test the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Increased extracurricular demands from the employer will decrease the job satisfaction of employees with low desire for social attachment to the workplace.

Hypothesis 2: Increased extracurricular demands from the employer will not affect the job satisfaction of employees with moderate desire for social attachment to the workplace.

Hypothesis 3: Increased extracurricular demands from the employer will increase the job satisfaction of employees with high desire for social attachment to the workplace.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Implications of prior studies. The literature is rather inconclusive on whether semi-mandatory extracurricular activities increase the job satisfaction of employees. I speculate that the variance in findings has resulted from previous experiments not controlling for the desire for social attachment of the employees whose job satisfaction was being measured. The findings of this experiment will help provide an explanation as to why previous studies have had such a wide disagreement in their findings.

The Hawthorne studies of Roethlisberger & Dixon (1939) would support the notion that after-work socialization increases job satisfaction. In Management and the Worker, they wrote of how the women in the Relay Assembly Room enjoyed meeting after work, and were more motivated by social than economic incentives. However, the validity of the Hawthorne studies has been doubted by many researchers. Furthermore,

the majority of the women in the Relay Assembly Room study did not retain their earnings, but instead paid them directly to their parents, lessening the effect of economic incentives on their behavior. As at the beginning of the study, none of the women were married, and four out of five lived at home with their parents, the demographics of the participants may have made them have a high desire for social attachment to the workplace.

While examining the motivation of managers to work over sixty-one hours per week, Brett & Stroh (2003) considered the hypothesis that “managers who work the longest hours are the most stressed and dissatisfied with their home life.” If that hypothesis were true, it would support the assertion that employees like socializing with their coworkers as a means of avoiding socialization with their families, and have a high desire for social attachment to the workplace. This hypothesis was found to be false, which was contrary to their earlier findings of Hochschild. Thus, from this study, it is ambiguous whether managers enjoy the opportunity to socialize away from their families. Attendance at “optional” employer-sponsored events should not be used as an indication of employee preferences, as employees may feel obliged to attend for career-based reasons that are not related to their utility from the event.

Nelson and Quick (1991) investigated how the availability of social support at work affects the adjustment and job satisfaction of new employees. They proposed a model in which the availability of social support was positively related to job satisfaction and employee performance ratings, and negatively related to psychological distress and intention to leave. Employees were asked to indicate the availability and helpfulness of various forms of social support, using a 5-point Likert scale to assess helpfulness, and

binary questions to assess availability. Interestingly, the authors found that job satisfaction ratings were higher among newcomers when mentors and senior coworkers were not available as sources of support. Although the findings were not significant, the data also showed that offsite training sessions and business trips led to lower job satisfaction. However, social and recreational activities and daily interactions with peers were shown to increase job satisfaction, albeit not at the ($p < .05$) level of significance. Gender differences were found in the study in that females reported their supervisors and secretaries as greater sources of support than males. The results of this study support the notion that increasing interaction with coworkers does not necessarily increase employee job satisfaction.

In examining the connection between work and family life, Rothbard (2001) explored whether work life has an enriching or depleting affect on family life. Men and women may contemplate the effects that attending company events will have on both their work and family lives. While attending an event may deprive employees of family time, it is possible that the resulting enrichment at work might carry over into the employee exhibiting a more positive affect at home. Likewise, if an employee is scorned at work due to non-attendance, the attendance decision might negatively affect an employee's emotions while at home. Rothbard found that her results were moderated by gender; for women, work negative affect decreased family attention, while for men, it did not. However, workplace enrichment had a positive effect on family life for men, but not for women. As gender differences played a critical role in Rothbard's study, this study will examine whether desire for social attachment to the workplace is related to gender.

A subsequent study, Rothbard, Phillips, & Dumas (2005), examined the effect of flextime and onsite childcare policies on the job satisfaction and organizational commitment of employees. Rothbard found that for employees seeking to integrate work and home life, when perceived access to onsite childcare increased, job satisfaction increased. Flextime reduced the job satisfaction of integrators due to its segmenting nature. Meanwhile, employees seeking to segment work and home life experienced decreased job satisfaction as perceived access to onsite childcare increased. While the Rothbard et al. (2005) study is somewhat similar to this study, it differs in that the intervention in this study does not mix the employee's family and work life. However, the intervention of increased extracurricular social activities does force employees to reallocate their social time from their family to their employer.

The effect of talking to others on social support and occupational stress was examined by Fenlason & Beehr (1994). The authors surveyed 173 secretaries, and measured both the stressors and strains experienced by the secretaries, along with the emotional and instrumental support that the secretaries received and the content of their communications with their families and others in their firms. One of the strains measured was job dissatisfaction. Although job dissatisfaction was aggregated into an index of psychological strain, it was found that emotional support from an employee's supervisor and from an employee's coworkers were inversely correlated with an employee's level of psychological strain. The examination of the contents of the communications between employees and their secretaries revealed that non-job communications with coworkers had a significant inverse correlation with psychological strain, while non-job communications with the supervisor, family, and friends of an employee had an

insignificant but inverse correlation with psychological strain. Thus, this paper appears to show that workplace socialization reduces the psychological strain of employees, one component of which is job dissatisfaction.

Social networks and job satisfaction. Hurlbert (1991) tested whether “social networks serve as a social resource which affects job satisfaction through the provision of social support.” According to Hurlbert, in networks with lower levels of mean education, having a strong degree of membership in a social circle of coworkers had a negative effect on job satisfaction. Meanwhile, the opposite effect on job satisfaction was found in networks with higher levels of mean education. Thus, it appears that the benefits of membership in a social circle of coworkers may be related the educational status of the members of the group. The author speculated that more educated social circles might be better able to offer supportive resources than less educated social circles.

Employers may encourage extracurricular socialization in order to increase to social capital residing within work groups. While this does not necessarily affect the job satisfaction of employees, it may provide a sound economic justification for expenditures on employer-sponsored semi-mandatory social activities. Oh, Chung, & Labianca (2004) found that “groups with greater numbers of informal socializing relationships with the formal leaders of other groups achieved greater group effectiveness.” The authors interviewed several of the employees in the companies that they examined, and quoted one executive as stating, “In Korean companies, [informal socializing] ties are key factors for successful task performance, rather than just being supplementary ones for task-related ties.” Both the qualitative and quantitative findings of this study suggest that companies may have a vested interest in investing in extracurricular socialization for

reasons that go beyond improving job satisfaction. If social ties are tied strongly to group performance, companies may even be willing to encourage social events at the expense of job satisfaction.

Conclusions from the literature review. While it is clear that an employee only interested in maximizing their satisfaction with their work life would attend a social function, and an employee only interested in maximizing their non-work life would not attend, it is less clear how an individual interested in work-life balance would behave. Following from Rothbard's results, an employee's decision to attend might be based on a combination of the employee's gender (which may be related to desire for social attachment to the workplace) and on the impact of the attendance decision. If attendance is a Herzberg motivator, it has the potential to increase satisfaction at work. Under these conditions, men would likely choose to attend, while women would not, as an increase in workplace satisfaction carries over to domestic satisfaction for men, but not for women. However, if attendance is merely a hygiene factor, women might attend, while men might not, as a decrease in workplace satisfaction carries over into domestic life for women, but not men.

The literature does not provide a strong consensus on whether employees in general experience an improvement in job satisfaction as a result of forging closer interpersonal ties with their coworkers. The diversity of findings in the literature may very well be related to the previous authors having omitted a variable that determines the direction of the findings.

Dispositions & Desire for Social Attachment to the Workplace

According to Staw & Ross (1985), the terms *personal dispositions*, *traits*, *personality*, and *individual characteristics* are often used nearly interchangeably, and can collectively be used to describe dimensions a set of common assumptions, “that it is possible to characterize people on certain dimensions, that these dimensions have some stability over time, and that these dimensions are useful in predicting individual behavior across situations.” If an employee’s desire for social attachment to the workplace is measurable, stable over time, and useful in predicting behavior such as job satisfaction, it can be safely classified as a disposition.

While investigating the origin of job attitudes, Staw & Ross (1985) stated, “One rather radical possibility is that job attitudes may reflect a biologically based trait that predisposes individuals to see positive or negative content in their lives.” In stating this, they theorized that job attitudes may be rather biologically tied to dispositions. Staw, Bell, & Clausen (1986) explored the nature and endurance of dispositions and found that affective dispositions measured in adolescence were significantly predictive of the job attitudes experienced by the individual over the subsequent fifty years. There is a debate in the literature as to whether job attitudes are determined by the person being considered, or by the job site into which the person has been immersed. By measuring a group of people over an extended period of time, and through many situations, Staw, Bell, and Clausen were able to provide strong support for the dispositional approach to job attitudes.

Meanwhile, Weiss & Adler (1984) contributed to the person versus situation debate by finding that some individuals are more influenced by dispositional influences,

while others are more influenced by situational influences. They also helped define dispositions by stating, "Personality dispositions are hypothetical constructs that are seen to act as mediating variables in explaining overt reactions or behavior." In the case of the experiment in this paper, desire for social attachment to the workplace is being treated as a disposition, and the reaction that it is being said to mediate is job satisfaction.

Job Satisfaction

As there are multiple definitions of job satisfaction, before it is possible to measure job satisfaction, the term must be first defined within the context of this paper. For the purposes of this paper, *job satisfaction* will be defined according to the definition provided by Locke (1976): "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences." Locke wrote that job satisfaction comes "from the perception that one's job fulfills or allows the fulfillment of one's important job values, providing and to the degree that those values are congruent that those values are congruent with one's needs." Thus, as different people hold a given value to differing degrees of importance, a job's fulfillment of that value will generate differing amounts of job satisfaction in different people.

Herzberg's Motivator-Hygiene Theory states that job satisfaction is caused by a combination of motivating factors, which lead to job satisfaction, and hygiene factors, which lead to job dissatisfaction. Motivating factors fulfill the growth needs of an employee, while hygiene factors fulfill the employee's physical needs. An employee's relationships with his boss and coworkers are classified as a hygiene factors. Thus, while having a better relationship with coworkers will not create positive job satisfaction, the improvement may reduce the level of dissatisfaction that an employee is experiencing.

Corporate social events that are outside of the work day are likely something that the employee neither expects nor requires in order to achieve a good relationship with his colleagues. Thus, Herzberg's theory appears to suggest that these events do not increase job satisfaction, but have the potential to lessen the extent to which it is decreased.

Employees with a high desire for social attachment to the workplace will likely be dissatisfied if the employer provides few social opportunities. This dissatisfaction can be lessened if extracurricular social opportunities are provided.

Although now substantially criticized (Locke, 1976), a competing theory of job satisfaction is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. According to Maslow (1954), people progress up a hierarchy of needs that consists of physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs, and finally, the need for self-actualization. People do not seek the fulfillment of higher needs (such as self-actualization) until they have had all of the preceding needs (such as safety) met. This theory can be applied to job design, as the theory states that people are unlikely to obtain satisfaction from fulfilling higher needs until lower needs are met. Thus, if socializing with coworkers leads to the fulfillment of the belongingness need, employees are unlikely to benefit from employer-sponsored extracurricular events unless their physiological needs and safety needs are met. The author anecdotally recalls an incident at a company at which he worked in which employees complained that it was wrong for the company to be spending money on lavish social events for employees (fulfilling belongingness and possibly esteem needs), at a time when the company was reducing the quality of the health insurance it offered its employees (fulfilling safety needs).

METHODS

Sample Participants and Procedures

In order to test my hypotheses, I have conducted a study at Telecorp, a technology company with a “cell” structure, in which employees work within relatively autonomous teams. In the study, teams of software developers at Telecorp were divided into two groups, one of which had biweekly employer-sponsored dinner parties, and the other of which did not. Fortunately, there is little between-team interaction at Telecorp. This allowed the teams to be divided into the two conditions without the teams in the no dinners condition feeling offended. Teams of software developers were chosen as workers on the teams actively collaborate with each other, yet work rather autonomously from other teams. The teams at Telecorp are known to have slightly different cultures, and thus if it were discovered that certain teams were having more social functions than others, it would likely be attributed by employees as being the result of idiosyncratic team leadership differences. During debriefing, team members were asked whether they were aware that they were part of an experiment involving employer-sponsored extracurricular events. None of the subjects involved reported being aware of the experiment.

In all, two-thousand participants took part in each condition of the experiment. Team size varied, but the average team had eight members. Teams were randomly assigned to the two conditions. Teams that were lead by a person with a Social Security Number ending in an even number were assigned to have the extracurricular dinners, while the other team leaders were ordered to hold no such events. The experiment was

conducted between the months of January and June, a time of year during which there are no major traditional holiday office parties. (It might cause suspicion if a team became less festive than in the past.) In the event of a special occasion such as a birthday, team leaders in both conditions were instructed to not offer employer funds to support the event, nor to plan an event outside of the work day. (Lunch events at the employee's expense were acceptable, so long as they were not instigated by the team leader nor formally supported by the team leader.) Team leaders in the biweekly event condition were instructed to e-mail their supervisees invitations to dinner outings occurring on weeknights after work hours. The leaders were given funding to pay for the outings, and told to ask their supervisees to RSVP so that it would be implied that attendance at the event was not mandatory but would be observed by the supervisor.

To control for fixed effects and to enable us to measure if there were any changes in the desire for social attachment to the workplace in employees, the employees were asked to fill out both the desire for social attachment to the workplace and the job satisfaction surveys at both the beginning of the experiment and at its conclusion. The surveys used in the experiment were packed in a larger biannual survey traditionally distributed by the company.

Measures

The experiment sought to measure job satisfaction (the dependent variable), and employee desire for social attachment to the workplace (the moderating variable).

Employee job satisfaction was measured using the short form of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. Employees were also given a survey designed to elicit their desire for social attachment to the workplace. As the prior findings of Rothbard suggest

that this variable may be related to gender, this survey also contained a demographic component.

Measuring desire for social attachment to the workplace. Burt (1992) attempted to assess people's attachment to other individuals in their social networks by asking people to list individuals with whom they worked, and then respond to the question, "To what extent did you go out with this person for social activities outside work such as going out to informal lunch, dinner or drinks?" In this study, we wish to measure desire for social attachment to the workplace, not actual social attachment. Thus, the questions asked attempt to assess the ideal situation, not the present situation. Additionally, it is essential to measure the direction of the desired level of change in social attachment to the workplace. It is possible that people in the high socialization condition may desire for their employer to hold even more extensive extracurricular social events. Many of the studies in the literature have shown that demographic characteristics such as gender and educational status have an effect on job satisfaction and how an employee interacts with his network at work. These effects will be largely eliminated through the use of a differences-in-differences approach, in order to determine whether demographics affect the moderating variable, demographic variables have been also been observed. The survey deliberately asked employees about their demographic characteristics in between asking them about their feelings about their current level of social interaction with other employees and the amount of time that is spent in such interactions. While anchoring effects are inevitable on a questionnaire of this length, the demographic questions may to some extent serve as a diversion.

To create an index from the results of the survey, the answers to the questions with Likert scale responses were summed. For the last two questions, a respondent's answer was divided by the maximum response for a member of his team, and then multiplied by 9. The resulting figures were added to the sum of the Likert scale responses to form an index score. The demographic information was not included in the index score, but can be used during the analysis to help determine whether index scores are correlated with constant demographic characteristics of the employees.

To validate the survey, the survey was given to one hundred employees at Telecorp who were not involved in the primary study. These employees were given the survey and also asked, "How strongly do you desire to socialize with your coworkers?" They responded on a nine-point Likert scale. Afterwards, I tested to see whether the index scores were correlated with employee self-assessments of desire to socialize with coworkers.

Circle the rating that best corresponds to your feelings about your present level of outside interaction with your coworkers.

Too Little Right Amount Too Much

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9

Compared to your current level of interaction with your coworkers outside of work hours, your ideal level of interaction would be:

Much Less Same Amount Much More

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9

Circle the rating that best corresponds to your feelings about your team's present level of outside of work, employer-sponsored social gatherings.

Too Few Right Number Too Many

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9

Compared to the current level of employer-sponsored events that your team holds, the ideal level would be:

Many Fewer Same Amount Many More

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9

Does anyone else reside in your household besides yourself? Yes No

Do you have minor children living in your home? Yes No

Please circle your sex: Male Female

Please circle the range containing your age: <20 20-29 30-39 40-40 50-59 60-69 70+

Please circle your race: Asian Black Hispanic Native American Non-Hispanic White Other

Please circle your highest level of educational attainment:

Some High School High School Graduate Some College

College Graduate Master's Degree Professional Degree

How many hours do you spend in the average month after or outside of work with one or more members of your team (socializing, eating meals, attending recreational events, etc.)?

Of the hours in the answer above, how many of them were spent attending activities and gatherings not officially planned or sponsored by your employer or team?

Figure 2: Survey for Measuring Employee Desire for Social Attachment to the Workplace

Measuring job satisfaction. According to Locke, “Job satisfaction may be defined as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences.” Since job satisfaction may or may not be linked to performance (and this linkage may be culturally-dependent), it is vital to not measure satisfaction by measuring performance. Instead, job satisfaction can be measured directly through self-reporting. While there are known issues related to self-reporting, the most widely accepted methods of measuring job satisfaction rely on self-reporting.

According to O’Connor, Peters, & Gordon (1978), the three most frequently used job satisfaction indexes during the period from 1976 to 1978 were the Job Descriptive Index (Smith, Kendall, & Huhn), the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist), and the Brayfield-Rothe Index (Brayfield & Rothe). O’Connor et al. noted that the diversity in measures of job satisfaction used in papers is problematic, as it makes it difficult for the results of papers to be compared.

To avoid contributing to that problem, this study has used a preexisting measure of job satisfaction rather than investing a new one. Thus, this study uses the Short Form of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ-SF), which according to Levinson & DeMatteo (1998), treats job satisfaction or dissatisfaction as the positive or negative reaction that people have to their job. As the MSQ-SF can be used to produce an aggregate index of general satisfaction, it has been used as this study’s dependent variable.

Levinson & DeMatteo note that when interpreting the results of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, it is important to remember that older workers are in general more satisfied than younger workers, as people become more aware of their needs and

make better choices as they age. Likewise, men are more satisfied than women, and whites are more satisfied than blacks due to issues of unequal treatment at the workplace. The authors interestingly note that while job satisfaction is positively correlated with education across occupations, the correlation is negative within an occupation. These demographic effects are unlikely to affect the results of this study, as the dependent variable is change in job satisfaction, not absolute level of job satisfaction.

As this study has assumed that desire for social attachment to the workplace is invariant within an employee over time, the survey pertaining to this variable only theoretically needed to be measured in January. However, to ensure that it is truly dispositional, it was measured in June as well. Since the study attempted to observe a change in job satisfaction over time, it was necessary to administer the MSQ-SF at both the beginning of the experiment in January, and at the conclusion of the experiment in June. As Staw & Ross (1985) mentioned it is possible that job satisfaction is as much a function of the disposition of the employee as the environment in which he is employed, within employee changes in job satisfaction were used as the dependent variable. This eliminates the potential problems posed by the dispositional components of job satisfaction on the results of this study.

Analyses

Determining cut-offs for the moderating variable. Unfortunately, there is no natural way of dividing employees into groups containing individuals with low, medium, and high desire for social attachment to the workplace. To create cut-offs for the three categories, we used the 33rd and 66th percentiles of companywide values on the desire for

social attachment index as cut-offs. It is possible that some teams may consist entirely of people with high desire for social attachment to the workplace, while other teams may consist of a mix of people with moderate and low desire for social attachment to the workplace. The cut-off values used cannot be generalized to a population outside of Telecorp, as the distribution of employees within Telecorp may differ substantially from the distributions of employees among these three categories in other companies. It is conceivable that people in Telecorp have overall lower desires for social attachment to the workplace due to their interest in the semi-solitary job of software development. A person who is considered high on this variable at Telecorp may be considered low within a different corporate context.

Testing whether an employee's desire for social attachment to the workplace is dispositional. Before conducting any further tests that assume that desire for social attachment to the workplace is dispositional, it is essential to measure that this is in fact true. If this variable is dispositional, it must meet the Staw & Ross (1985) definition of a disposition cited previously. Since our index makes this a property of an individual, and our experiment seeks to show that it affects a form of behavior, all that is needed to show is that it is relatively invariant within an individual over time. To do this, a dependent t-test was performed in which a paired comparison was made of each employee's January and June desire for social attachment to the workplace indices. If the two indices are not found to be significantly different ($p < .05$), we can assume that the index measured a disposition.

		Desire for Social Attachment to the Workplace		
		Low	Moderate	High
Employer-Sponsored Extracurricular Activities	None	A	B	C
	Monthly	D	E	F

Figure 3: Cells of Experimental Conditions

Testing the hypotheses. In the experiment performed on the Telecorp employees, the intervention determined whether employees were in the top or bottom row of the above grid. However, the dispositions of the individual employees determined the column in which they were placed in the grid. It was hypothesized that the change in job satisfaction experienced by employees in Cell A would be higher than that experienced by employees in Cell D. Likewise; the change in job satisfaction experienced by employees in Cell F was hypothesized to be higher than that experienced by employees in Cell C. The changes in job satisfaction experienced by employees in Cell B and Cell E were hypothesized to not be significantly different from zero. In order to test the hypotheses, we conducted Student's t- tests comparing the job satisfactions in the cells mentioned above ($H1: A > D$, $H2: B = E = 0$, $H3: C < F$) to determine whether the findings were significant ($p < .05$).

The effect of demographics on the moderating variable. In order to explore the causes of an employee's desire for social attachment to the workplace, the demographics captured in the survey were regressed against the desire for social attachment to the workplace index. Ordinary Least Squares Regression was used, and as no interactions were suspected, no interaction terms were included. The regression included binary variables indicating whether the employee had others living with him, indicating whether the employee had minor children living with him, and indicating the gender of the employee. The age of the employee, the race of the employee, and the educational attainment of the employee were treated as categorical variables. The omitted categories were Under 20, Non-Hispanic White, and Some High School for each of the respective variables mentioned previously.

$$\begin{aligned}
 Y_{\text{DesireSocialAttachment}} = & \beta_0 + \beta_{\text{Residents}} \text{Residents} + \beta_{\text{Children}} \text{Children} + \beta_{\text{Sex}} \text{Sex} \\
 & + \beta_{29} \text{Age2029} + \beta_{39} \text{Age3039} + \beta_{49} \text{Age4049} + \beta_{59} \text{Age5059} + \beta_{69} \text{Age6069} + \beta_{70} \text{Age70} \\
 & + \beta_{\text{Asian}} \text{Asian} + \beta_{\text{Black}} \text{Black} + \beta_{\text{Hispanic}} \text{Hispanic} + \beta_{\text{NativeA}} \text{NativeA} + \beta_{\text{Other}} \text{Other} \\
 & + \beta_{\text{HighSchool}} \text{HighSchool} + \beta_{\text{SomeCollege}} \text{SomeCollege} + \beta_{\text{College}} \text{College} + \beta_{\text{Masters}} \text{Masters} + \beta_{\text{Professional}} \text{Professional} \\
 & + \varepsilon
 \end{aligned}$$

Figure 4: OLS Regression Exploring the Causes of Desire for Social Attachment to the Workplace

If there are insufficient people in each category to obtain statistical power, it may be necessary to merge some of the categories within a variable. For instance, age ranges could be aggregated into twenty year spans, and race could be turned into a binary variable indicating whether or not the employee was Non-Hispanic White. The results of this regression, while not necessary to test any of the hypotheses presented in this paper, will enable future researchers to better understand the employee traits that influence desire for social attachment to the workplace.

DISCUSSION

Implications for Theory

The results of these experiments will be very valuable for human resource departments and others responsible for corporate event planning. If it is found that the effect of employer-sponsored events is moderated by an employee's desire for social attachment to the workplace, employers can attempt to measure this variable so that they can make decisions that are optimal for maximizing the utility of their employees. The financial resources spent on employee events have two obvious alternative uses. The funds can either be given to the shareholders via an increased profit, or can be given to the employees in the form of a higher wage. If workplace social events actually decrease employee job satisfaction for some employees, it might be in the employer's best interest to find alternative uses for the funds being spent on social activities. Vegetarians like John might prefer receiving an extra \$10 from their bosses to being invited to a barbeque. Employers have traditionally spent large sums of money on entertaining employees. Rather than blindly continuing to do so, it is essential to investigate whether this behavior increases job satisfaction.

The literature has not provided a consensus opinion on how employer-sponsored extracurricular socialization affects employee job satisfaction. By proposing that the relationship between employer-sponsored extracurricular events and job satisfaction is moderated by the employee's desire for social attachment to the workplace, this paper helps explain the inconsistencies in the literature. It is quite possible that the different

companies that were examined in the past had substantially different employee populations with different levels of desire for social attachment to the workplace.

Limitations and Conclusions

This study is limited by the fact that it took place in only one firm. Also, only employees of a relatively similar educational background, engaged in a somewhat collaborative activity, were surveyed. However, the use of a large number of teams in the survey helped to increase the demographic diversity of the participants along variables such as age and familial status.

Another issue that must be addressed is that of the origin of an employee's desire for social attachment to the workplace. Newly hired employees whom have yet to encounter the firm likely base their desire for social attachment to the workplace on their dispositions, their familial status, and possibly a host of other demographic variables. However, once employees have gotten to know their coworkers, it is possible that their desire for social attachment to their *present* workplace may differ from their desire for social attachment to a *theoretical* workplace. If employees like their coworkers, they are likely to desire stronger social attachment, while if they despise their coworkers, they are likely to desire weaker social attachment. Thus, this variable may be a product of both the employee's disposition and his previous interactions with his environment.

Unfortunately, the only way to somewhat mitigate this issue would be to study employees that had yet to have social interactions with their teams. However, by the time of the second survey given in June, the same problem would emerge, as people would have established experiences with their teammates by then. This problem should not substantially affect the results of this study, as comparisons were only made between

individuals in different conditions with a similar desire for social attachment to the workplace. If past negative experiences have made employees decrease their desire for social attachment to the workplace, the only effect on this experiment will be that more employees will reside in Cell A and Cell D of the diagram “Cells of Experimental Conditions” than would have otherwise occurred. While pre-existing notions of desire for socialization in the workplace will affect the distribution of employees in the various conditions, it will not affect the change in job satisfaction experienced within a condition.

It is possible that there may be alternative explanations for both positive and negative findings for this study. If the hypotheses are found to be false, it may be the case that the employees within the firm are insufficiently diverse, and primarily belong to one of the archetypes. For instance, if all of the employees in the firm are family men, there may appear to be a strictly negative relationship between employer-sponsored extracurricular activities and job satisfaction regardless of the value of the moderating variable. As the cut-offs between the archetypes were artificially-induced, it is possible that they are in the wrong positions.

If the hypotheses of this study are not falsified, it is possible that the linkage between extracurricular events and job satisfaction is moderated by a variable other than employee desire for social attachment to the workplace. This could occur if the relationship was determined by a variable highly correlated with desire for social attachment. For instance, it is possible that the findings might be better explained by the presence of minor children in the home. As the desire for social attachment to the workplace index incorporates a question that assesses whether the employee has children, a correlation between these two variables exists.

Certain jobs and industries may tend to attract individuals with higher or lower inherent desires for social attachment to the workplace. Jobs that are solitary in nature may attract individuals who have less desire for social attachments in general, and as a result have less desire for social attachment to the workplace. It may improve the job satisfaction of these individuals if fewer semi-mandatory employer-sponsored events are imposed. On the other hand, jobs that involve large amounts of interaction among coworkers may attract people whom desire strong social attachment to the workplace and experience increased job satisfaction as a result of attending employer-sponsored events outside of the workday. Employers may benefit from researching the desire for social attachment to the workplace of their workforces before determining how substantially they should invest in holding employer-sponsored extracurricular events. However, employers may wish to hold some interdivisional events for employees with all levels of desire for social attachment to the workplace, as Oh et al. (2004) demonstrated that social ties between the members of a group and the leaders of other groups within the same organization can increase the effectiveness of the group.

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