

**The Effect of Dysfunctional Thought Processes  
on Subjective Well-Being and Job Satisfaction**

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**Running Head: DYSFUNCTIONAL THOUGHT PROCESSES**

**Abstract**

While the dispositional approach to job satisfaction has received a good deal of recent attention, a fundamental deficiency in past dispositional research is a failure to use existing theories to explain why individuals are unhappy and dissatisfied with their jobs. Locke (1976), Judge (in press), and Judge and Hulin (in press) suggested that thinking processes should be studied in relation to job satisfaction. This study tested the thesis that the cognitive theory of depression, which focuses on irrational thought processes, will help in understanding both subjective well-being and job satisfaction. A causal model involving subjective well-being, job satisfaction, dysfunctional thought processes, and other relevant influences was hypothesized and tested using a stratified random sample of university employees. Ratings were obtained from two sources in order to reduce single-source bias. The results indicated strong support for the overall model and for the efficacy of dysfunctional thought processes.

## **The Effect of Dysfunctional Thought Processes on Subjective Well-Being and Job Satisfaction**

In a recent review of the literature on dispositional sources of job satisfaction, Judge (in press) argued that much of the research linking dispositional states to job satisfaction is atheoretical in nature. He argued that virtually no dispositional research has attempted to explain, drawing from existing theories of social cognition or attitude formation, why individuals are unhappy in general or dissatisfied with their jobs. Judge (in press) argued that such a deficiency in past dispositional research is regrettable, since established theories from personality and social psychology may have a great deal to offer in terms of explaining how affective states are formed. The importance of understanding the psychology behind dispositional effects on job satisfaction was also recently emphasized by Weiss (1991).

Locke (1976) and Judge and Hulin (in press) suggested that thinking processes may influence subjective well-being and job satisfaction, although they did not propose an actual theory. A potentially relevant theory is the cognitive theory of depression (Beck, 1963, 1987), which has been one of the most influential theories in the areas of counseling and clinical psychology. This theory maintains that erroneous thought processes such as overgeneralization, perfectionism, and dependence on others are an important cause of depression (and thus, by necessity, unhappiness). The purpose of the present study is to investigate the role of dysfunctional thought processes in affecting subjective well-being and job satisfaction. Based on relevant theory and past research, a causal model was proposed and tested relating dysfunctional thought processes, subjective well-being, and job satisfaction.

### **Relevant Theory and Past Research**

#### **Cognitive Theory of Depression**

The cognitive theory of depression holds that the way individuals think is a source of unhappiness. Specifically, depressed or unhappy individuals are hypothesized to have repetitive, automatized thoughts (Beck, 1987) which are irrational and dysfunctional in

nature. The irrational beliefs or processes are manifested in such cognitive tendencies as overgeneralization (e.g., "If I do a bad thing, it means I am a bad person"), perfectionism (e.g., "If I am any good, I should be able to excel at anything I attempt"), dependence on others (e.g., "If people whom I care about do not care for me, it is awful"), and desire for social approval (e.g., "I often do things to please others rather than myself"). Dysfunctional thoughts make individuals vulnerable to depression because they undermine self-worth (Kuiper & Olinger, 1986; Kuiper, Olinger, & Swallow, 1987). For example, believing one must be good at everything guarantees failure. Trying for the approval of others leads one to sacrifice one's own judgment and values. Thus, depression or unhappiness results from these thinking styles.

From a psychological perspective, dysfunctional thought processes comprise cognitive habits or beliefs that screen, code, categorize, and evaluate information inappropriately (Keller, 1983). Treatment of depression or unhappiness, therefore, begins with identification of the dysfunctional beliefs that lead to depression or unhappiness. Attempts are then made to expose and test the individual's erroneous beliefs and methods of processing information. Finally, individuals are shown how to alter their dysfunctional attitudes and thought processes (Beck, Rush, Shaw, & Emery, 1979; Keller, 1983).

Recently, Haaga, Dyck, and Ernst (1991) have provided a review of the empirical evidence on the cognitive theory of depression. Cognitive theory, to be empirically supported, requires that a number of testable hypotheses be supported. The more important among these, as reviewed by Haaga et al. (1991), are: negativity (unhappy people's thoughts are more negative than those of happy people); automaticity (negative cognitions are unintended, repetitive, and automatized); association with noncognitive symptoms (negative cognitions are associated with symptoms of depression or unhappiness); and information processing biases (negative cognitions reflect biases in the processing of information such as selective memory and cognitive distortions).

In reviewing the empirical status of these hypotheses, Haaga et al. (1991) found substantial support for them by past research. Specifically, those who have more dysfunctional cognitions are more likely to be unhappy or depressed than those who have fewer such cognitions (Crandell & Chambless, 1986; Dobson & Shaw, 1986). Similarly, the automaticity of cognitive processes has been upheld (Bargh & Tota, 1988; Wenzlaff, Wegner, & Roper, 1988). Haaga et al. (1991) review a large number of studies supporting another assumption, that dysfunctional cognitions lead to depression or unhappiness. Finally, some support is indicated for the hypothesis that those who are unhappy or depressed cognitively distort information or are biased in their recall and interpretation of information (Ingram, 1990; Lewinsohn & Rosenbaum, 1987). In sum, Haaga et al.'s (1991) results are supportive of the validity of the cognitive theory of depression. Furthermore, considerable empirical support exists regarding the validity of cognitive therapy in reducing depression or unhappiness (Dobson, 1989). Despite the apparent efficacy of the theory in explaining why individuals become unhappy with themselves, and, by implication, their jobs, the cognitive theory of depression has not been tested as a potential explanatory factor in dispositional or job satisfaction research.

#### Affective Disposition, Subjective Well-Being, and Job Satisfaction

Recently, a number of researchers (Davis-Blake & Pfeffer, 1989; Gerhart, 1987, 1990; Judge, in press; Judge & Hulin, in press) have argued that while past dispositional research (Arvey, Bouchard, Segal, & Abraham, 1989; Levin & Stokes, 1989; Pulakos & Schmitt, 1983; Staw & Ross, 1985; Staw, Bell, & Clausen, 1986) has made an important contribution to the knowledge base concerning determinants of job satisfaction, it has suffered from conceptual ambiguities. In particular, Judge (in press) and Judge and Hulin (in press) argued that a clearer distinction needed to be made between the general disposition to be satisfied (affective disposition) and how happy an individual currently is with his or her life.

Judge and Hulin (in press) defined affective disposition as the tendency to respond to classes of environmental stimuli in a predetermined, affect-based manner. This may be closer to a dispositional construct than concepts which represent current affective states. Specifically, dispositional researchers have often assumed that negative affectivity (Watson & Clark, 1984) is the appropriate dispositional construct (Brief, Burke, George, Robinson, & Webster, 1988; George, 1989; Levin & Stokes, 1989). However, the tendency to respond to the environment in an affect-based manner (affective disposition) is not the same as how happy an individual currently is or is not (as measured by positive/negative affect or subjective well-being). Dispositional tendencies may be thwarted or enhanced by numerous factors in the environment and in the person.

Subjective well-being represents an ongoing state of psychological wellness (Diener, 1984). While Judge and Hulin (in press) maintained that the disposition toward affect (affective disposition) is different from experienced affect (subjective well-being), the authors hypothesized that the predisposition to be happy or satisfied in general should influence the current level of happiness in individuals.

Drawing from Weitz (1952), Judge and Hulin (in press) measured affective disposition by assessing how satisfied the respondent was with a list of predominantly neutral or innocuous objects common to everyday life (e.g., one's telephone number, one's first name, 8 1/2" x 11" paper). Individuals highly satisfied with the objects as a whole may have a tendency to see most things (including themselves and their lives) in a favorable light. The obverse is true as well. Results by Judge and Hulin (in press) suggested that their measure of affective disposition was distinct from measurements of subjective well-being.

In addition to investigating the relationship between affective disposition and subjective well-being, Judge and Hulin (in press) further hypothesized that subjective well-being and job satisfaction were mutually causative. Testing the relationship between affective disposition, subjective well-being, and job satisfaction using a sample of nurses,

Judge and Hulin (in press) found that affective disposition significantly influenced subjective well-being. Further, the reciprocal relationship between subjective well-being and job satisfaction was supported. These results suggest that it is important to distinguish between the disposition toward affect and affect actually experienced. Equally important, the relationship between subjective well-being and job satisfaction appears to be bidirectional -- subjective well-being may be both a significant cause of, and effect on, job satisfaction.

A limitation in the Judge and Hulin (in press) study is that it provides little knowledge of the psychological process underlying the subjective well-being and job satisfaction relationship. While subjective well-being and job satisfaction clearly are psychological states, no effort was undertaken to understand the psychology behind the formation of these attitudes. Locke (1976) suggested that judgments of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with one's job and other life domains may derive from individuals' thought processes. Judge and Hulin (in press) suggested that such thought processes might influence both one's overall level of well-being and job satisfaction. However, Judge and Hulin (in press) could only suggest the possibility as an important area for future research. It represented an important suggestion, however, as it holds the possibility of providing a theoretical explanation underlying the formation of subjective well-being and job satisfaction.

### **Causal Model**

In order to investigate the causal relationships between dysfunctional thought processes, subjective well-being, and job satisfaction, a causal model was hypothesized. These relations were embedded in a network of other constructs to avoid omitted variable bias (James, Mulaik, & Brett, 1982). The hypothesized structural model is displayed in Figure 1. Rectangles in the figure represent exogenous or independent variables. Circles represent endogenous or dependent variables. The links in this model are discussed below; the more critical links are discussed first.

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Insert Figure 1 About Here  
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### Dysfunctional Thought Processes to Subjective Well-Being

Probably the most important assumption of the cognitive theory of depression is that dysfunctional cognitive processes are a primary source of unhappiness. A considerable amount of research suggests that dysfunctional thought processes lead to depression or unhappiness (Kuiper et al., 1987; Olinger, Kuiper, & Shaw, 1987; Wierzbicki & Rexford, 1989; Wise & Barnes, 1986). Because these thought processes reflect negative views and methods of thinking that are unhealthy, unhappiness or depression often results. For example, holding oneself to a perfect standard, believing that all mistakes impeach one's character, and sacrificing one's self-fulfillment for others are all unhealthy attitudes that may manifest themselves personal worthlessness (Beck, 1967). Thus, individuals' thought processes or cognitive styles are hypothesized to induce unhappiness (i.e., low subjective well-being).

In hypothesizing the effect of dysfunctional thought processes on unhappiness, two relevant issues must be kept in mind. First, while many studies have linked depressive attitudes with dysfunctional cognitions, few studies have related these two concepts in a rigorous causal framework (Haaga et al., 1991). Hence, the causal link hypothesized here must be done so with some degree of caution. Second, the cognitive theory of depression is fully applicable to "normal" individuals (i.e., individuals without clinically diagnosed mental disorders) (Smith & Allred, 1986). Therefore, it is appropriate to relate such thought processes to subjective well-being in a causal framework that applies to members of the work force.

### Subjective Well-being to Job Satisfaction

A hypothesized causal link from subjective well-being to job satisfaction is included in Figure 1. Judge and Hulin's (in press) study, as well as past dispositional research (Levin



& Stokes, 1989; Pulakos & Schmitt, 1983; Staw & Ross, 1985; Staw et al., 1986; Weitz, 1952), provides support for hypothesizing that subjective well-being will influence job satisfaction. Thus, past empirical data support the effect of general affective states on job satisfaction.

There are several theoretical reasons why subjective well-being may influence job satisfaction. One possibility from cognitive psychology that may explain the dispositional effect is the following: subjective well-being, as the outcome of affective disposition, may influence how individuals collect and recall information about their job. Bower (1981) demonstrated this process with respect to life events. Motowidlo and Lawton (1984) and Porac (1987) have suggested a cognitive approach with respect to job attitudes, where certain dispositions can influence job affect. Thus, happy individuals may tend to store, evaluate, or recall job information differently from unhappy individuals. However, while this suggests that subjective well-being influences job satisfaction, a direct empirical test of the explanation is lacking.

#### Job Satisfaction to Subjective Well-being

A significant correlation between job and life satisfaction consistently has been found. In a recent meta-analytic review, Tait, Padgett, and Baldwin (1989) found the average correlation between job and life satisfaction, corrected for measurement error, to be .44. Some researchers have interpreted the correlation between job and life satisfaction as evidence for a dispositional effect on job satisfaction (see Staw & Ross, 1985). It is equally possible, however, that the causal direction is from job satisfaction to life satisfaction. In fact, Judge and Hulin (in press) found a significant causal effect of job satisfaction on subjective well-being. Estimating a nonrecursive relationship between subjective well-being and job satisfaction allows inferences regarding the causality between the two constructs.

Undoubtedly the reason behind the effect of job satisfaction on subjective well-being is the importance of work to individuals' lives. In fact, empirical evidence does

support the moderating effect of job importance on the job and life satisfaction relationship (Iris & Barrett, 1972; Rice, McFarlin, Hunt, & Near, 1985). The centrality of work to individuals, whose roots may lie in the Protestant work ethic, probably derives from the fact that most individuals spend the majority of their waking hours at work. Having our identities and our time bound to work suggests its importance in judgments of subjective well-being.

#### Job Dysfunctional Thought Processes to Job Satisfaction

Locke (1976) speculated that individuals' thought processes may influence happiness or satisfaction derived from all domains of life. The link from dysfunctional thought processes to subjective well-being was reviewed earlier. However, Locke's (1976) arguments also suggest that dysfunctional thought processes may influence job satisfaction. This would be particularly true if the dysfunctional attitudes were oriented toward the job. Dysfunctional thought processes are expected to affect job satisfaction as mediated through subjective well-being. On the other hand, job dysfunctional thought processes are hypothesized to influence job satisfaction directly, because overgeneralizing about job experiences, holding one's job performance to a perfect standard, and so on, should cause individuals to be less happy about their jobs. Therefore, it is hypothesized that job dysfunctional attitudes, which are dysfunctional attitudes oriented toward the job, will negatively influence job satisfaction. Since the degree to which individuals think dysfunctionally about their job should be affected by the degree to which they think dysfunctionally in general, dysfunctional thought processes are hypothesized to influence job dysfunctional thought processes.

#### Job Satisfaction to Job Avoidance

Absenteeism, turnover, and lateness have often been described by organizational researchers as examples of employee withdrawal (Beehr & Gupta, 1978; Porter & Steers, 1973; Youngblood, 1984). Typically, research has investigated these behaviors in isolation. Job satisfaction has often been related to these isolated behaviors, with inconsistent results.

Hulin (1991) and Fisher and Locke (in press) have argued that the prediction of job behaviors in isolation is limiting in that it provides little basis for generalizing to other job behaviors that may be functional equivalents or manifestations of the same underlying, general behavioral construct. In proposing a general behavioral construct, Hulin (1991) defined employee withdrawal as "the set of behaviors that dissatisfied individuals enact to avoid the work situation; they are behaviors designed to allow avoidance of participation in dissatisfying work situations (p. 476)." Hanisch and Hulin (1991), Roznowski and Hanisch (1990), and Roznowski, Rosse, and Miller (1991) reported data suggesting that individual withdrawal behaviors covary in such a manner as to suggest a general factor. Fisher and Locke (in press) found that a set of activities labeled as job and work avoidance were consistently related to job dissatisfaction.

In the present study job avoidance is hypothesized to be significantly influenced by job dissatisfaction. Job avoidance does not represent only actual withdrawal behaviors, but also intentions and the behavioral tendencies of individuals (Hanisch & Hulin, 1991; Roznowski et al., 1991). Based on the theory of reasoned action or planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1974), such cognitions are assumed to lead to actual withdrawal behaviors. However, consistent with the psychological focus of the present research, the cognitions of the individual are of immediate interest.

#### Other Causal Links

The distinction between affective disposition and subjective well-being was reviewed earlier. It is hypothesized that the immediate outcome of affective disposition is not job satisfaction, but rather individuals' level of subjective well-being (see Figure 1). Those predisposed to view their environment in a positive manner are more likely to have a sense of contentment and happiness to their lives. Those predisposed to be critical of life's events and stimuli are expected to be unhappy and troubled. Accordingly, affective disposition is hypothesized to influence the general affective state of the individual.

Four of the more important demographic influences on subjective well-being identified in Diener's (1984) review of the literature were age, race, marital status, and sex. The majority of recent evidence suggests that subjective well-being tends to increase with age (Diener, 1984), although the effects may be modest. Perhaps because of urbanicity and lower socioeconomic status, minorities generally have been found to have lower subjective well-being than whites (Andrews & Withey, 1976; Diener, 1984). Diener (1984) suggested that "...virtually all relationships [between marital status and subjective well-being] are positive (pg. 556)." Although the effect of gender on subjective well-being has yielded inconsistent results, most research suggests that males are somewhat less happy than females (Diener, 1984). Finally, research suggests that employee assistance programs (EAPs), where employers sponsor counseling or treatment for personal problems (substance abuse, family conflicts, depression), result in higher levels of subjective well-being (Ramanathan, 1990). Thus, based on past research, these variables are hypothesized to influence subjective well-being, as represented in Figure 1.

Hulin, Roznowski, and Hachiya's (1985) model of job satisfaction and employee responses was used to select relevant influences on job satisfaction. Hulin et al. (1985) hypothesized that job satisfaction is a function of the difference between work-role inputs, what the individual contributes to the work role (e.g., time and effort), compared to role outcomes, what is received (e.g., pay, status, intrinsic factors). All else being equal, as outcomes received relative to inputs invested increase, job satisfaction is hypothesized to increase.

In the present study, education level and hours worked were selected as representations of work role inputs. Therefore, as shown in Figure 1, controlling for work-role outcomes, the more education the respondent has achieved, and the more hours worked, the lower the level of job satisfaction the individual is hypothesized to report. Wage rate and intrinsic factors were chosen as manifestations of work role outcomes, and were expected to influence job satisfaction positively.

Hulin et al. (1985) further proposed that perceived labor market conditions will affect job satisfaction. In periods of high unemployment, for example, individuals will perceive their inputs as less valuable because there are others in the labor market willing to contribute their inputs. Therefore, as unemployment rises, the perceived value of inputs relative to outcomes declines, and job satisfaction increases. The converse is also hypothesized, where low unemployment (and many alternatives) reduces job satisfaction. In Figure 1, perceived time to find a job of comparable pay is expected to be positively related to job satisfaction; those who believe it would take a long time to find a comparable job are more likely to be happy with what they have.

Hulin et al. (1985) and Smith, Kendall, and Hulin (1969) have argued that individuals' frame of reference, which they defined as past experience with relevant outcomes, influence how individuals perceive current outcomes received. The fewer, or less valued, the outcomes received in the past, the greater the current job satisfaction. Figure 1 shows that, as a frame of reference variable, present wage compared to past is expected to relate positively to job satisfaction.

An unexplored variable in general and in job satisfaction research in particular is that of ambition. Howard and Bray (1988) found that the desire to get ahead was one of the most powerful predictors of advancement in their longitudinal study of AT&T managers. Since people use their aspirations (goals) as standards of self-satisfaction (Bandura, 1986), it means that people with high goals should be harder to satisfy than people with low goals (Mento, Locke, & Klein, in press). This suggests that high ambition, since it represents a high standard of aspiration, should be associated with low satisfaction. Ambitious people are those who are not satisfied with where they are now in the organizational hierarchy. Thus, ambition is hypothesized to negatively influence job satisfaction.

## Method

### Setting and Subjects

The setting for this research was a large Northeastern University. Subjects, members of the clerical profession, were sampled from all departments within the university. Sixty-one percent of respondents worked in academic (versus nonacademic) departments. Education of the respondents ranged from high school diploma (32%) to college degree (15%). The average annual salary was \$19,045 ( $SD = \$6,293$ ), with a range of \$9,840 to \$37,032. Sixty-four percent of the respondents were married. Age ranged from 19 to 69 years, with an average age of 37.7 years ( $SD = 10.9$  years). Average hours worked per week were 39.1 ( $SD = 3.2$  hours). Professional experience ranged from newly employed to 40 years, with a mean of 8.8 years ( $SD = 7.0$  years). Eighty-seven percent of the respondents were female and 96% were white.

### Measures

Multiple measurements of all core constructs were used to generate more reliable estimates. Since the relations of interest in this study were psychological in nature, self-report data were considered an essential source of information on the key constructs of interest. However, in an attempt to remove the possibility that the relations observed were due to self-report bias, the focal employee's dysfunctional thought processes and subjective well-being also were evaluated from the perspective of a "significant other" (i.e., a spouse or family member). These significant other reports, in conjunction with self-reports, should yield a more accurate, complete, and unbiased estimate of the focal employee's dysfunctional attitudes and subjective well-being.

Dysfunctional thought processes. Dysfunctional thought processes were measured by the Dysfunctional Attitude Survey (DAS), a 100-item survey that measures dysfunctional cognitions or beliefs (Weissman & Beck, 1978). The DAS is one of the more widely used and valid measures of cognitive processes (Cane, Olinger, Gotlib, & Kuiper, 1986; Oliver & Baumgart, 1985). Individuals are asked to indicate their agreement with statements

regarding how they think on a 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree) point scale. Although the 100 items are summed to form an overall measure of dysfunctional thought processes, the DAS contains items measuring several types of dysfunctional thought process. For example, dependence on others is assessed through such questions as, "I cannot find happiness unless I am loved by another person." Perfectionism is measured by questions such as, "A person should do well at everything he or she undertakes." Overgeneralization is measured by questions such as, "If someone performs an inconsiderate act, it means he or she is a bad person." In the present study, the coefficient alpha reliability estimate for the 100-item scale was .93.<sup>1</sup>

Significant others were asked to evaluate how often the focal employee engaged in dysfunctional thought processes. The significant other was asked to indicate how descriptive 18 statements taken from the DAS were of the focal employee. These statements were selected to sample the full range of types of dysfunctional thought processes. The coefficient alpha for this sub-scale was .76.

Job dysfunctional thought processes. Job dysfunctional thought processes were measured by presenting 13 hypothetical scenarios to individuals, and asking them the extent to which the scenario was descriptive of them. Again, an effort was made to sample all dimensions of dysfunctional thought processes as applied to the job. For example, perfectionism on the job was measured by the following question:

Blue made an error on an important piece of work, although no great disaster occurred as a result and the error was eventually corrected. Blue concluded that there was no excuse for the mistake, and that the error was unforgivable. People should not make mistakes at work, Blue thought.

These 13 items were summed to form an overall scale. The coefficient alpha for this scale was .70.

The significant other was asked to indicate how descriptive 5 scenarios describing job dysfunctional cognitions were of the focal employee. The scenarios were taken from

the 13 items on the focal employee survey. The coefficient alpha reliability estimate for this 5-item scale was .65.

Subjective well-being. Subjective well-being was measured using several instruments. Self-reported subjective well-being was measured with six instruments, four of which also were completed by the significant other. The four sub-scales that were completed by both the focal employee and significant other were: 1) a modified version of the Affects Balance Scale (see Diener, 1984), a list of 22 adjectives describing hedonic states (e.g., nervous, sad, elated, delighted) (coefficient alpha, self-report = .94; coefficient alpha, significant other report = .94); 2) the "percent time happy" item (Fordyce, 1977), which Diener (1984) concluded to have high validity as a single-item measure; 3) a modified version of Underwood and Froming's (1980) measure, which contained 9 items with which the respondent is asked to indicate their agreement (e.g., "I am usually quite cheerful;" coefficient alpha, self-report = .92; coefficient alpha, significant other report = .91); 4) the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985), a five-item measure of life satisfaction consisting of such statements as, "In most ways my life is close to ideal" (coefficient alpha, self-report = .86; coefficient alpha, significant other report = .88).

Additionally, focal employees completed the PANAS scales (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), which assess both positive affect and negative affect by asking the respondents to indicate how often they generally experience ten positive and ten negative emotions (e.g., upset, proud, ashamed, inspired). Diener (1990) has argued that positive and negative affectivity are best thought of as measurements of subjective well-being, since evidence indicates they are not completely independent, totally stable, and they correlate highly with other measures of subjective well-being. The coefficient alpha for the positive affect sub-scale was .87. The coefficient alpha for the negative affect sub-scale was .89. Using all six measures of subjective well-being assessed from two sources should yield a valid measure of the construct.



Job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was measured by the Job Descriptive Index (JDI; Smith et al., 1969), as modified by Roznowski (1989). The five facets of job satisfaction measured by the JDI are (coefficient alpha reliability estimates are in parentheses): pay ( $\alpha = .87$ ), promotion ( $\alpha = .88$ ), supervision ( $\alpha = .89$ ), co-workers ( $\alpha = .89$ ), and the work itself ( $\alpha = .88$ ). The intercorrelations of those facets reveal a communality among the dimensions, suggesting a second-order general factor (Judge & Hulin, in press; Parsons & Hulin, 1982) that represents overall job satisfaction.

Affective disposition. Affective disposition was measured by what is termed the Neutral Objects Satisfaction Questionnaire, based on Weitz's (1952) survey. The survey measures affective disposition by assessing how satisfied the respondent is with a list of mostly neutral objects common to everyday life (e.g., telephone service, restaurant food, popular music). Individuals highly satisfied with the objects as a whole may have a tendency to see most things (including themselves and their lives) in a favorable light. The obverse is true as well. Weitz's (1952) scale was modified in several ways described by Judge (1990). Results by Judge and Hulin (in press) suggest that the survey is a valid measure of affective disposition. In the present study, the coefficient alpha for the scale was .69.

Work role inputs and outcomes. Work role inputs (education, hours worked), outcomes (pay, intrinsic factors), time to find a job of comparable pay (assessed on a 1 = a day or two to 4 = more than a year scale), and present wage compared to past wages (assessed on a 1 = present wage is much lower to 5 = present wage is much higher scale) from the Hulin et al. (1985) model were assessed with specific questions in the focal employee survey. The information on intrinsic job characteristics was obtained by a five-item version of the Job Diagnostic Survey (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). Although the possibility exists that assessments of intrinsic job characteristics are influenced by workers' level of job satisfaction (Roberts & Glick, 1981), this may be the best information on intrinsic factors available.

Ambition. Ambition was assessed by a question on the survey that asked the individual how many levels they wished to move up from their present job. Individuals who express a desire to move up many levels are assumed to have more ambition than those who are content where they are at. The mode response was a desire to move up 2 levels from the present position.

Job and work avoidance. Consistent with Hanisch and Hulin (1991) and Roznowski et al. (1991), job avoidance was measured by asking the individual to objectively report the likelihood of engaging in the following 6 behaviors within the next year (rated on a 1 = very unlikely to 5 = very likely scale): absent, tardy, miss meetings, chat with co-workers about non-work issues, quit, and give less than 100% on the job (shirk). These items were summed to form a job and work avoidance scale. The coefficient alpha for this scale was .70.

Demographic information. Age, gender, marital status, race, and whether the individual had been through the EAP program were assessed through individual questions on the focal employee survey.

### Procedure

Before surveys were mailed to the focal employees, a stratified random sample was drawn from the approximately 2,000 clericals working at the university. The sample was stratified by college and department to assure that significant breadth in survey responses was obtained. The sampling procedure produced a list of 479 names and campus addresses. Surveys were mailed to employees through campus mail. Subjects were told in a cover letter that individual responses were completely confidential, and were promised their choice of a \$10 honorarium, a 50-50 chance of winning \$20, or a 1-in-5 chance of winning \$50, in return for their participation. Subjects also were asked to sign an informed consent form. Twenty-six surveys were returned as undeliverable. Thus, from a potential pool of 453 respondents, 231 usable surveys were returned, representing a response rate of

51%. Response rates did not significantly differ among the departments or between men and women.

As indicated earlier, a "significant other" (e.g., spouse or family member) was asked to complete an evaluation of focal employee dysfunctional thought processes and subjective well-being. Focal employees were informed that their honorarium would be paid only upon return of both self-report and significant other surveys. These dual sources of information about dysfunctional thought processes and subjective well-being should minimize social desirability, halo, and response set tendencies, and increase the relevant heterogeneity of the measures (Roznowski & Hanisch, 1990). Two-hundred and seventeen usable significant other surveys were returned, indicating that for 94% of the individuals who returned the focal employee survey, a significant other survey also was returned. Therefore, both self-report and significant other data were available on 217 employees. No significant differences in respondent characteristics (e.g., age, race, sex, salary) were found between those who had a significant other survey returned and those who had not.

#### Covariance Structure Model

Covariance structure models, estimated in the present study with LISREL 7 (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1989), allow the joint specification and estimation of the measurement model (e.g., the loadings of the measures on their hypothesized constructs represented in Figure 1) and structural model (e.g., the relationships among the constructs) hypothesized to account for the observed data (Long, 1983). There are two models tested in this study. The first model is based solely on self-report data. The second model is based on "full data," both self-report and significant other evaluations. The advantage of the self-report only model is that there are fewer parameters to be estimated relative to the sample size. This is an important consideration as the number of estimated parameters relative to sample size is an important determinant of convergence, standard errors, and model fit in covariance structure models (Hayduk, 1987; Idaszak, Bottom, & Drasgow, 1988). The full data model allows inferences about causal relations without complete

reliance on self-report data. Comparisons of the models permit inferences about the degree to which relations are based on "true" covariance, or self-report method variance. If there is substantial convergence between the models, the findings in the self-report model can be assumed to represent true content relations and not method determined relations. Because both models possess advantages, each was estimated and the results reported.

The measurement and structural components of each model were estimated separately. This strategy reduces the number of parameters to be estimated simultaneously, an important consideration in estimating complex models such as those estimated in the present study (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Schmitt & Bedeian, 1982). Burt (1976) has also argued that simultaneous estimation results in interpretational confounding (i.e., inability to diagnose the lack of fit in a covariance structure model). Anderson and Gerbing (1988) noted that interpretational confounding can be minimized by the two-step process of first estimating the measurement model, then estimating the structural model; no constraints are placed on structural parameters when estimating the measurement model.

The most widely used measure of fit is the chi-square statistic. Perhaps the most conventional use of chi-square is to examine the ratio of chi-square relative to the degrees of freedom (Hoetler, 1983; La Du & Tanaka, 1989). Other conventional fit statistics include the goodness-of-fit index, adjusted goodness-of-fit index, root-mean-square-residual, and coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ). It is important to note several limitations in interpreting fit statistics. First, a particular value of a fit statistic cannot be used to rule out the possibility of omitted variables. It is possible, albeit less likely, to infer based on examination of the fit statistics that a particular model fits the data well when in fact not all relevant causes of a dependent variable have been specified (La Du & Tanaka, 1989). Second, levels of most fit statistics depend on the sample size (La Du & Tanaka, 1989). Finally, since the underlying distributions of most fit statistics are unknown, evaluating their acceptability is subjective. It is best to interpret the acceptability of a particular