

## Impacts of Mindfulness and Emotion Regulation Skills on Job Satisfaction

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### Extensive Summary

#### Introduction

The most important thing is managing human resource which is the most precious capital of organizations. And it's only possible with employee focused human resource management. Because all employees should be motivated to be able to achieve the objectives of the organization. So expectations of employees should be taken into account by all level managers. All organizations aim to have employees who know the needs of the organization and eager to continue working happily in that organization. These features are directly related to the degree of job satisfaction.

It is known that job satisfaction not also increase work efficiency, employee performance and organizational citizenship behavior; but also decrease stress, depression and burnout. Therefore, job satisfaction has great importance in terms of both organizational and individual performance.

In this research the other concept is emotion regulation skill of employees. Humanbeings who are under the influence of their emotions, may react differently in response to events of both private life and business life. Emotion regulation strategies are needed in terms of job satisfaction. It is important that individuals getting distracted by their own thoughts and feelings and also not being obsessed with what happened in the past. This phenomenon, called "mindfulness" is being not affected from negative situations. Because getting distracted by own thoughts and feelings and also not being obsessed with what happened in the past are crucial.

The aim of this study is to examine a number of factors affecting job satisfaction. It is tried to determine the relationships of job satisfaction with emotion regulation skills and mindfulness.

#### Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction can be defined as "the degree of satisfaction of employees with their jobs" or "individual assessment of job gains and job conditions" (Demirel and Özçınar, 2009, p. 132). Job satisfaction is directly related to a person's individual

assessment of the job and personal values. The most common definitions of job satisfaction in the literature are “the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one’s job values” and “the extent to which people like or dislike their jobs” (Özutku, 2007, p. 84).

### **Emotion Regulation Skill**

Emotion can be defined as "brief conscious experience characterized by intense mental activity and a high degree of pleasure or displeasure ". Greenberg (2004) indicated that emotions can give meaning to the person’s life.

Due to the nature of a person, there is a structure of seeking pleasure and avoiding pain. However, emotion regulation does not also mean getting rid of negative emotions but also mean stopping positive emotions (Gross, 1998, p. 286). For example, doctors in a cheerful mood, should not express their positive feelings when they telling the patient that he has a deadly disease. Thompson and Calkins (1996) indicated that it is a need to regulate both emotions and causes of those emotions.

Emotion regulation skills that involve such processes as identifying and labeling emotions, allowing and tolerating emotions, establishing a working distance, increasing positive emotions, reducing vulnerability to negative emotions have been found to help in regulating high distress. Emotion regulation may include any coping strategy (problematic or adaptive) that the individual uses when confronted with an unwanted intensity of emotion.

### **Mindfulness**

Siegel (2010, p. 13) describes the lives of humanbeings as "all the thoughts and feelings to increase joy and happiness and to reduce pain and suffering". For this purpose human continuously produce thinking about past and future. Mindfulness is a word that refers to a basic human capacity for non-conceptual, non-judging and present moment centered awareness, a phenomenon called “seize the day”. This awareness arises from intentionally paying attention and acceptance toward what is happening while it is happening (Smoski et al., 2015). Kabat-Zinn (1994) defined mindfulness “the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgementally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment”.

When we are mindless, we are like programmed machines, computing information in a single-minded and rigid way. When we are mindful, we are open to surprise, oriented in the present moment, sensitive to context. There are some correlation results indicates that mindfulness is negatively associated with burnout, anxiety, and depression. Also mindfulness allows for flexibility interrupting automatic and habitual processes.

### **Method**

#### **Research Questions**

1. What are the relationships between job satisfaction, life satisfaction, mindfulness and emotion regulation skills?
2. What are the predictors of job satisfaction?

## Research Sample

This study was conducted on total 408 employees from both public and private sectors in Ankara/Turkey. In this study, Job Satisfaction Scale (Şahin and Durak, 1994), Emotion Regulation Scale (Gross and John, 2003), Toronto Mindfulness Scale (Toronto MS), (Lau et al., 2006), Integrative Self Knowledge Scale (Ghorbani, Watson and Hargis, 2008) and Personal Information Form were used. Ulaşan Özgüle (2011) adapted Emotion Regulation Scale to Tuskish Culture. Level of relationships between all variables were determined with correlation analysis.

The sample of the study includes 224 public (55%) and 184 private (45%) sector employees (total number was 408). 151 of 224 employees are working in security company and rest of them are teachers working in three different secondary schools. 74 of 184 private sector employees are engineers, 89 of them are technicians and 21 of them are truck drivers. Education levels of attendants are 0.2% of all employees is primary school graduate, 0.5% of them graduated from secondary school, 8.6% of them graduated from high school, 72.3% of them have bachelors degree, 18.4% of them have postgraduate degree. Attendants' work experience were 5 to 35 years (Mean = 11.95; S.D. = 7.83), ranging from 27.7% of the sample was male, while 72.3 % was female. Employees were chosen random and attend to survey voluntarily.

## Findings

It was found that independent variables (education status, age, emotion reappraisal strategies, mindfulness and life satisfaction) are significantly correlated with job satisfaction. Also the regression analysis revealed that some independent variables such as education status (2%), sectors (2.5%), work experiences (2.6%), life satisfaction (9.2%) predicted job satisfaction. Also education status, mindfulness, emotion reappraisal and job satisfaction predicted the life satisfaction.

In the present study it was found that the employees' life satisfaction is associated with their job satisfaction. Regression analysis was conducted to explore which variables predicted employee's job satisfaction.

According to the regression analysis, the level of employee education status is significantly predictive of both job satisfaction and overall life satisfaction. Therefore, the results showed that it was important to find out how each education group differentiates from each other.

Life satisfaction explained the variance of job satisfaction with the score of 9.2%. Education level (8.6%) and reappraisal (%3.4) predict life satisfaction (totally independent variables-%23.4).

In order to eliminate sampling bias that existed in terms of education levels, three education groups were created of 38 people. For this purpose, 247 people of undergraduate degree group and 27 people of postgraduate degree group randomly selected and removed from the analysis.

One-Way ANOVA test was conducted in order to determine whether variables differed or not differed according to the level of education (Gürbüz and Şahin, 2014). It was found that emotion suppression, mindfulness, life satisfaction and job satisfaction differ significantly in terms of education groups.

- ✓ Emotion Suppression: High School and Below > Bachelors
- ✓ Curiosity: Post Graduate > Bachelors
- ✓ Integrative Self Knowledge: Post Graduate > High School and Below
- ✓ Life Satisfaction: Post Graduate > Bachelors Post Graduate > High School and Below Bachelors > High School and Below
- ✓ Job Satisfaction: Bachelors > Post Graduate > High School and Below

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The results of this study show life satisfaction, reappraisal emotion regulation skills and mindfulness are related. People who can increase mindfulness levels and regulate their emotions efficiently, can also cope with stress and be affected at a minimum level of negative feelings.

Mindful people can evaluate their own feelings and thoughts objectively. They can get rid of the effects of negative experiences and can focus on present. Therefore we can assume that mindful people can be more satisfied with their lives. Because mindfulness while helping people to accept experiences without judgement, also provides people to acquire effective emotion regulation skills. Mindful people can control their emotions before they get intense.

In the present study mindfulness was found that a significant predictor of job satisfaction. Mindful people can be more satisfied with their jobs, because they can easily deal with some problems about their business. The employees who can evaluate and regulate their emotions and use effective stress management will be more happy and satisfied in their daily and work life.