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ABSTRACT

This document contains three papers from a symposium on emotion and behavior in the workplace that was conducted as part of a conference on human resource development (HRD). "Emotion Work, and Perceptions of Affective Culture in a Military Nonprofit Organization" (Jamie L. Callahan, David R. Schwandt) reports on a study of the emotion work conducted by men and women in a nonprofit organization which found that women were significantly more likely than men to say that the culture of the organization required members to be affectively neutral. "Mature Behavior in Organizations: Indications of Growth and Learning in the Workplace" (Dorothy Marcic, John Maslyn, Debbie L. Waddell) outlines a model of developmental growth of individuals in organizations that consists of four stages (egocentric, protective, compliant, and dynamism) and discusses the model's implications for creating a healthy organization that functions as a high-performing system. "Sensation-Seeking Behaviors: Predictors of Job Performance?" (Thomas G. Reio, Jr., Christopher R. Hardy) reports on a survey of 233 workers at 4 service industry companies in which path-analytic techniques demonstrated that sensation-seeking behaviors can negatively influence workplace learning, technical and interpersonal job performance, and job satisfaction. The papers contain reference sections. (MN)

2000 AHRD Conference

Emotion and Behavior in the Workplace

Symposium 20

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Emotion Work And Perceptions of Affective Culture in a Military Nonprofit Organization

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This paper explores the emotion work conducted by men and women in a nonprofit organization and their perceptions of the feeling rules in the organization. The study found that qualitative differences showing that women performed more emotion work than men were supported by a quantitative survey that measured perceptions of affective culture. Specifically, women were more likely than men to say that the culture of the organization required members to be affectively neutral ($p<.007$).

Keywords: Emotion Work, Culture, Non-profit Organization

Goleman (1995) reports a number of studies that highlight that very young boys and girls handle emotions quite similarly. However, as they mature, girls begin to respond differently than boys in many situations. Damasio (1994) points out that emotions have both a "nature" and a "nurture" component; indicating that socialization may modify an individual's emotional response, including how one experiences emotion and how one perceives the environment that drives the emotion. It is very possible that women have different emotion responses to situations because they perceive the situations differently than men. These situations may be expanded to include broader generalizations of an organizational culture. This paper looks at men and women in a nonprofit organization and explores their differences in their management of emotions and their perceptions of organizational affective culture.

Problem Statement

The management of experience and expression of emotion can be referred to as "emotion work" (Hochschild, 1983). Emotion work has been studied in a wide variety of organizations, including airlines, police departments, bill collection agencies, and health care agencies (e.g., Hochschild, 1983; Pogrebin & Poole, 1991; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1991; Smith & Kleinman, 1989). Although women have often been the focus of these studies, the reason for that was because women are often employed in *positions* that require more emotion work (Hochschild, 1983). Wharton and Erickson (1993; 1995) have specifically looked at women's roles in a variety of contexts as they were related to emotion work. Certainly emotion work studies have looked at gender within a marital or intimate relationship context (e.g., Duncombe & Marsden, 1998; Hochschild, 1990). In general, however, studies have not looked at the differences between men and women in the performance of emotion work. The present study was an outcome of a larger study that looked at how patterns of emotion work *in general* were associated with actions in a nonprofit organization (Callahan, In Press). A key finding of that study was that men and women in the organization had different patterns of emotion work. Specifically, women performed proportionately more emotion work than men did and this was particularly manifested in actions associated with the culture of the organization. Thus, this study sought to explore the possibility that men and women may have had different perceptions of the affective culture in this organization. Based on the qualitative findings, we believed that women were more likely than men to perceive the culture as affectively neutral. In other words, women would believe that the expression of emotion was not considered acceptable in this organization and would, therefore, report a lower score on the survey designed to measure affective culture. As a result, the following hypothesis was generated:
H1: Women will have a significantly lower score than men on the perception of affectivity in organizations scale.

Theoretical Framework

This study takes a broader look at Hochschild's (1983) emotion systems theory. It first looks at the action component of emotion systems theory, emotion work. It then goes further and looks at the perceptions held by organizational members regarding the affective culture of the organization. This may be considered the feeling rules component of emotion systems theory. This section provides an overview of both emotion systems theory and organizational culture, in particular the organizational culture associated with the United States Air Force.

Emotion work is a primary component of Hochschild's emotion systems theory. Hochschild called her work as "emotion systems theory" because it is comprised of "a system composed of individual acts of 'emotion work', social 'feeling rules', and a great variety of exchanges between people in private and public life" (Hochschild, 1983, p. ix-x). Emotion work is the active attempt to change, in either quality or degree, an emotion held by an individual (Hochschild, 1983). There are two primary types of emotion work–suppression and evocation. Suppression occurs when an individual is trying to eliminate or, at the very least, subdue an emotion that is present. The cognitive focus of this act is "on an undesired feeling which is initially present" (Hochschild, 1979, p. 561). Evocation is just the opposite; it occurs when an individual is trying to draw forth an emotion that is not present. Thus, the cognitive focus of the act is "on a desired feeling which is initially absent" (Hochschild, 1979, p. 561). The second major component of Hochschild's work is that of "feeling rules" (Hochschild, 1979; 1983). Feeling rules are the "socially shared, albeit often latent (not thought about unless probed at)" (Hochschild, 1979, p. 563) guidelines that govern how we want to try to feel. They guide our expression of emotion and they guide our attempt to internalize the acceptable emotion (as defined by the situational rule). Feeling rules are embedded within the culture framing the interaction.

The term "culture" first made its way into the English language in the 15th century through French from Latin roots (McArthur, 1992). Although culture has a long history among anthropologists and sociologists, the term "organizational culture" is relatively new among management and organizational scholars (Hatch, 1993). It was first used as a synonym for organizational climate in the 1960's (Hofstede, 1997). Denison (1996) argued convincingly that the difference between organizational culture and organizational climate is actually one of interpretation. Both terms represent the same phenomenon that can be seen as creating and influencing the social context of an organization. Thus, it may be said that organizational culture, in some form, has been studied among organizational scholars for quite some time.

Probably one of the most influential scholars in the field of organizational culture is Schein (Hatch, 1993). His conceptual model of organizational culture forms the foundation of much of the research in this area. Schein (1987) argued that organizational culture has three distinct levels that interact with one another: basic assumptions, values, and artifacts and creations. Basic assumptions are the unseen preconscious beliefs commonly held and taken for granted by organizational members. Values are conscious or espoused beliefs commonly held by organizational members. Artifacts and creations are the visible manifestations of the belief system, such as uniforms or logos.

Because organizations are subsystems of larger social systems, it is important to describe the culture of organizations as they relate to the institutionalized values of the superordinate system (Parsons, 1956). Although the organization presented here is not a formal affiliate of the United States Air Force, its relationship with the Air Force and aerospace industry and its overwhelming number of current or former Air Force personnel as members suggest that the Air Force may be considered the superordinate system for this organization. The Air Force culture, of course, is embedded within the larger culture of the military.

Many would argue that the famous words uttered by General Douglas MacArthur— duty, honor, country— best exemplify the culture of the military (Taylor & Rosenbach, 1996). However, these three words are perhaps more indicative of the *conscious* values held within the military. The *unconscious* basic assumptions which truly define the nature of the culture can best be characterized as having a "combat, masculine-warrior" orientation (Dunivin, 1994). While the military incorporates a wide variety of activities, one activity associated with the military defines its very existence— combat. In the prologue to the second edition of his classic treatise on the professional soldier, Janowitz commented that, "the notion of combat— preparation for battle and actual battle— has remained a central military value" (1971, p. xiv) throughout history. The masculine-warrior image is the second element of the military culture. Dunivin (1994, p. 533-534) describes the origin of this image:

> As an institution comprised primarily of men, its culture is shaped by men. Soldiering is viewed as a masculine role— the profession of war, defense, and combat is defined by society as men's work. Thus, a deeply entrenched "cult of masculinity" (with accompanying masculine norms, values, and lifestyles) pervades military culture.

Associated with this underlying combat, masculine-warrior culture is the traditional model of the military. This model "espouses conservative moralistic ideology as reflected in its ethics and customs" (Dunivin, 1994, p.

534). The traditional model reinforces socialization that complements the masculine norms and values of the underlying military culture. The military typically recruits and rewards those individuals who embody the combat, masculine-warrior ideology. This has resulted in an officer corps that is dominated by white men who perceive themselves as masculine warriors. However, the changing perspectives in American culture have begun to influence the models associated with the military culture.

An alternative model of the military is beginning to challenge the traditional model of military culture. This evolving model, largely in response to social pressure, is marked by more inclusionary beliefs, policies, and practices (Dunivin, 1994). This model is also based on the changing attitude among many military members that the best-qualified person should be selected for assignments, regardless of race, gender, or sexual orientation. Despite the growing influence of the evolving model, the military is still marked by the underlying culture of the combat, masculine-warrior. Thus, conflict and change is inevitable; yet the outcome is not certain. As Dunivin (1994) points out, this uncertainty leads to an enduring culture that embodies both change, with the evolving model, and continuity, with the traditional model.

The Air Force culture

Although the Air Force is the newest of the military services, there is some support that it may embody the traditional model more than the evolving model. In comparison to the other service branches, the Air Force has a higher percentage of non-combat occupations which offer the potential for a higher percentage of female participation (Stoddard, 1993). As the evolving model opens more occupational specialties to women, that percentage will probably increase. Nevertheless, a study conducted by Stoddard (1993) found that:

> ...the relatively low rates of female participation in the Air Force as compared to its minimal combat roles, cannot be attributed to organizational constraints. This might well be an informal consequence of gender preferences by its leadership (p. 30).

This gender preference among senior Air Force leaders had been made public by then-Air Force Chief of Staff, General Merrill McPeak when he testified before Congress in 1991:

> ...if ordered to choose between an inferior male pilot and a much better female pilot, he would choose the male. 'I admit it doesn't make much sense, but that's the way I feel about it,' he said. In other words, for General McPeak the issue is not job performance or ability, or even military effectiveness. The existence of female combat pilots would simply offend his sense of proper gender roles (Dunivin, 1994, p. 536-537).

More examples of the gender preferences institutionalized in the Air Force can be seen in symbols found at the elite proving ground of the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA). Academy graduates, in particular, are often considered to be the "professional" soldiers who are responsible for being the bearers of the military culture (Janowitz, 1971). The inscription that greets every individual who approaches USAFA reads, "BRING ME MEN." This is a very clear symbolic message to cadets being indoctrinated into the Air Force culture.

Despite the dominance of the traditional model of military culture, the evolving model of military culture certainly influences the Air Force. As with other branches of the military, external forces for social change have brought more diversity into the Air Force. Women and minorities have been integrated into most specialties within the Air Force, perhaps reluctantly. The strong culture of the Air Force has been influenced by laws and policies that have required the acceptance, or at least broader official tolerance, of minorities, women, and gays. These civilian directives are generally accepted by and eventually assimilated into the Air Force because the service adheres to the Clausewitzian model that the military is at the disposal of the civilian, political leadership of a nation because war is simply an extension of politics, but by other means (Paret, 1986). Thus, when given a directive, even one that conflicts with the very nature of the Air Force culture, the Air Force follows the directive. Only then can the evolving model of organizational culture begin to take a foothold.

Methodology

This was a primarily qualitative study that incorporated a quantitative survey as a triangulation element. The research site for the study was a nonprofit organization associated with aerospace and national defense. The organization is primarily composed of Air Force active duty and reserve component members, veterans, and retirees; however, membership is also drawn from civil service personnel, cadets, and civilian individuals who have never experienced military service, many of whom are affiliated with aerospace industry. The sample from this study was drawn from the professional staff, the Board of Directors, and the senior state leadership.

Four methods of data collection were used (individual interviews, observations, surveys, and document analysis) to provide a measure of validity through data-collection method triangulation (Patton, 1990; Yin, 1994). The survey that served as a data-collection method triangulation element contained a scale developed to measure the perceptions of affectivity-affective neutrality (i.e., the affective culture in the organization) (Parsons, 1951). The items for the scale were drawn from two studies on role expectations and conflict using Parsons'(1951) affectivity-affective neutrality pattern variable (Podell, 1966; 1967). The original studies focused on marriage and family contexts, so the items were modified for use in an organizational setting for this study. The items were as follows:

In this organization:	too much emotional involvement can lead to unrealistic plans.
	a certain amount of emotional detachment is necessary to achieve success.
	I would not be successful if I became too emotional.
	you cannot let sentiment overcome objectivity if you want to be effective.
	decisions regarding issues that affect the organization should not be influenced by sentimental factors.

The five Likert-type items had face validity and had shown reliability in the earlier studies (Podell, 1966; 1967); the Cronbach alpha performed on the data from the present study was .72. This was considered to be a sufficiently strong indicator of reliability for a scale with less than ten items (Cortina, 1993; Spector, 1992). Because this study was exploratory in nature, based on qualitative findings, further efforts to establish validity beyond face validity were not pursued. Certainly, future attempts to establish a more definitive connection between the performance of emotion work and the perceptions of the affective culture among men and women would require further validation of the scale.

The survey was administered to 242 members of the professional staff, the Board of Directors, and the leadership of the states. The sample size for the quantitative component of the study was 153 (119 men, 34 women). The 25 (16 men, 9 women) individuals interviewed for the study were selected from those organizational members who returned the survey. This ensured that a triangulation point was available for all interview participants. Over 800 pages of transcribed interviews and correspondence were content-analyzed using NUD*IST software. "Disinterested" colleagues performed coding and data interpretation verification. In addition, seven scholars with a basic understanding of the theoretical framework, yet unfamiliar with the research site, reviewed the findings and interpretations for consistency. Two staff and two volunteers in the organization also reviewed the final document for accuracy of interpretation.

Finally, a *t*-test was conducted using the 153 survey respondents to determine if the qualitative differences found between men and women in the performance of emotion work could be supported by the quantitative survey that captured perceptions of the affective culture, or feeling rules, in the organization. Certainly the two comparison groups differed in size (119 men, 34 women). There is debate about the negative implications of unequal group size on simple comparisons of means (Lomax, 1992). However, because a significant difference in variance between the two groups would exacerbate any potential negative implications (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 1994), a homogeneity of variance test was performed. There was not a significant difference in the variance of each group ($p<.500$); thus, further comparison between the two groups was warranted.

Results

In the interviews and written documentation, a total of 174 incidents of emotion work were identified out of 605 references to emotion. While women did not necessarily perform the majority of the emotion work actions, they often performed more emotion work than expected based on their representation in the interviewed sample. For example, women represented 36% of the interviewed sample, yet they accounted for 46% of the references to emotion. Also, while men comprised 75% of the volunteers from whom documentation contained emotion work references, their comments accounted for only 57% of the emotion work actions discussed by volunteers. In other words, women seemed to perform more emotion work in this organization, particularly among the volunteer members. It is important to note that women were not well represented in the senior leadership of this organization. In the fifty-year history of the organization, only two women had ever served as a national officer, both as National Secretary. Further, among the staff leadership, only one of the ten senior staff members was female.

The vast majority of the emotion work incidents, 115 of them, were associated with suppression of emotion. Women mentioned approximately 51% of the actions regarding the suppression of emotion. The content and type of emotion work did not differ substantially between men and women, however. The emotions suppressed were primarily negative affects, including frustration, anger, disappointment, fear, and sadness. One female participant reported her emotion work associated with a critical project:

> I was so stressed out by this and it was like [he] didnt get it. ... [T]he toll it took in stress level... was phenomenal. I was so stressed out... that when I went to my therapist, who I was venting all this stuff to, I just said, 'I am so angry, Im about to hit somebody. Im afraid Im going to haul off and slap somebody."

Women performed an inordinate amount of emotion work, usually suppression, associated with cultural issues in the organization. Several of them referred to the organization as a 'white, male, preferably pilot" group or a "Good Ol' Boy network". One female volunteer, a pilot, talked about suppressing her anger at an older male volunteer who voiced his opinion that leadership positions should be reserved for (male) pilots. She commented that she suppressed her desired response of, "Well, you know, I have to take my skirt off to put on my flight suit."

There were also two cases of suppression of positive emotion. One female and one male staff member discussed the suppression of positive affect in relation to holding back praise for the success of others. When discussing interactions with 'the field", the volunteers throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia, a male staff member said, 'I have the occasion, the good fortune, once in a while to be with one of these effective groups and its a feeling of inspiration and admiration... . And I dont think its necessarily appropriate [to express that] other than in simple ways." Regarding daily operations on the staff, a female member commented that, 'we dont make a big deal if somebody did a *great* job. Its just, Im proud to be working with you.' Guess what? We can do this thing again next year."

Evoking emotions was mentioned 20 times. Not surprisingly, positively valenced affects were most often the elicited emotion. The affects ranged from evoking a simple smile to generating the appearance of being enthusiastic. Women were responsible for 60% of the references to evoking emotions. Once again, the difference between men and women was not in the content or type of emotion work; rather, it was simply the amount of emotion work each performed. One example of evocation of positive affect was mentioned by a female volunteer:

> ...there are lots of times throughout the meeting where Im really not interested in what theyre talking about and I tend to try to look like Im interested in what theyre saying without closing my eyes or doing something... that I think would be inappropriate. I sit there and look like Im interested in whats going on.

There was, however, a negative affect evoked for one male volunteer. At the opening ceremony of the organizations annual convention, a 'Roll of Honor" is presented to honor those organizational members who died during the previous year. While another member commented on her genuinely felt sadness during this event, one volunteer talked about how he usually had to evoke sadness because he did not know any of those who had died. He was often able to generate feelings of sadness:

> You say its sad possibly for those people around him that loved him or respected him or worked with him or whatever. Especially if its not somebody that has died because they got old, but somebody that died at a younger age.

A unique type of evocation of emotion appeared in this study. Most researchers have reported two distinct categories of emotion work, suppression and evocation (e.g., Hochschild, 1983; Wharton, 1993). However, several respondents in this study explicitly discussed occasions in which they evoked an emotion in conjunction with suppressing another. Because references to this phenomenon have not been made in other research associated with emotion systems theory, I refer to such occurrences as 'veiling", using one emotion to cover up another. This is similar to the Freudian defense mechanism of reaction formation (Juni, 1997; Newman & Newman, 1995). There were 14 references to veiling emotions. For example, one staff member worked with a major awards program for the organization. She found the awards recipients ungrateful and arrogant. In short, she just didnt like to be around them. Nevertheless, she swallowed her anger and put on a smile for the duration of her contact with the recipients.

A retired senior officer who had served in Vietnam gave the most poignant example of veiling. He equated emotions to a "monster" that needed to be controlled in order to serve effectively. Describing his experience with combat, this volunteer remarked:

> ...here their best buddy just got shot down and they saw him being led off. And that night theyre having a party like an Irish wake and theyre saying, "Well, the guy was really stupid because he did something dumb and thats how it happened." Thats how you isolate yourself.

This type of veiling is similar to what Ashforth and Humphrey (1995) refer to as 'normalizing" emotions. In other words, undesirable emotions are reframed to maintain harmony.

The references to veiling were relatively disproportionate between male and female respondents. Women, who represented 36% of the subjects, reported 43% of the veiling incidents. Interestingly, this was the only category in which men performed a greater percentage of the emotion work. In all but one case, the valence of the emotions related to veiling was mentioned, negative emotions were always suppressed and positive emotions were always evoked. The final case was a generic reference to veiling that did not specify the emotion.

Finally, subjects made 25 references to generic emotion work or managing emotions. This generic emotion work referred to managing emotions in general, without specific discussions of what type of management was being used (i.e., suppression, evocation, or veiling). Like both the suppression and evocation of emotion, generic emotion work references were disproportionately female (56%). Often these references focused on managing emotions of others, in particular in the context of leaders managing followers. For example, one male participant remarked:

> I always used to as a young officer watch the... commander... get up there and tell [us] how great we all are. You know, be the motivator. And as the cynic in me always said, "Isn't this goofy?" But over time as I learned about the cohesion and saw the cohesion, I realized it's a very, very important part of the cohesion even if, as a leader, you sound goofy. You know, in front of some of the most cynical you*are* really, [but] the message is being received.

In summary, the qualitative findings revealed four different types of emotion work— suppression, evocation, veiling, and generic. Overall, the content of the emotion work and the type of emotion involved were fairly consistent between men and women. The key difference was found in the amount of emotion work actually performed. In general, women performed a greater amount of emotion work than men in this organization, especially in reaction to cultural issues. The distribution of emotion work is at Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of Overall Emotion Work Actions by Type

	Suppression	**Evocation**	**Veiling**	**Generic Emotion Work**
Male	56 (49%)	8 (40%)	8 (57%)	11 (44%)
Female	59 (51%)	12 (60%)	6 (43%)	14 (56%)
Total	115 (66%)	20 (12%)	14 (8%)	25 (14%)

Because the women appeared to be performing more emotion work than the men, in particular around cultural issues, the survey responses to affective culture were analyzed. This *t*-test was performed simply to determine if women and men had a different perception of the extent to which displays of emotion were accepted in the organization. A significant difference would lend support to the qualitative findings that seemed to show that women performed more emotion work, perhaps because of their perceptions of the organizational feeling rules. A higher score on this scale indicates a perception of a more affective culture; a lower score indicates a more affectively neutral culture. Based on the qualitative findings, one would expect to find that women perceived a more affectively neutral culture in this organization (i.e., they would have a lower score). The mean score for women was 19.7; the mean for men was 21.7. The difference between the male and female scores on the affective culture scale was significant at $p<.007$.

Discussion

The quantitative findings supported the qualitative findings in this study. The vast majority of emotion work conducted in this organization was suppression; women performed more emotion work than men; and women were more likely to perceive that the culture of the organization required affective neutrality (i.e., emotional suppression). Thus, the emotion work performed by women in this organization may largely stem from their perceptions of this organization's Air Force-based "combat, masculine-warrior" culture. Certainly the male dominated culture of the organization and the more pronounced minority status of women in the organization may be a factor in the higher levels of emotion work conducted by women. It is also possible that women are more "in tune" with their feelings as some literature on encoding (expressing) and decoding (interpreting) emotion suggests (Gallois, 1993; McConatha, Lightner, & Deaner, 1994).

Women may also report more instances of suppressing anger than men because of the negative cultural perception associated with women expressing such emotions. Research suggests that behavior associated with assertiveness is viewed more favorably when it is performed by men than when performed by women (Davis, LaRosa, & Foshee, 1992). Comments by male volunteers suggested that they believed women should engage in activities and professions intended to "support" their husbands. There was also a belief that women had not risen to the highest leadership ranks of the organization because those who were otherwise eligible tended to be "too masculine" or "too aggressive". In other words, they did not fit the cultural model either for women or for organizational leaders. In any case, there is a power differential between men and women in this organization that suggests a need for the women to manage their stronger negative emotions in order to succeed (Davis et al., 1992; Gallois, 1993).

Dunivin (1988) and Tetreault (1988) argued more than ten years ago that women in the military did not have a critical mass to have a voice for change. While that is *probably* still true for the active duty military, it is *definitely* true of this military-influenced organization. Dunivin (1988) noted that women in the Air Force "internalized the male-defined work identity and role" (p. 64). A similar phenomenon may be occurring among the female volunteers. This internalization may have created a kind of dissonance for the women. Two of the four female volunteers discussed the importance of not only maintaining a leadership identity among the male volunteers but also maintaining relationships with the wives of the other leaders. They seem to have recognized that many of the men, at least subconsciously, considered the wives to be the peer group of the female volunteers. But, by becoming active as volunteers, these women were no longer considered peers by the wives of the male volunteers. As a result, the women volunteers "accentuated work roles that were rewarded" and "downplayed devalued gender roles" (Dunivin, 1988, p. 64) in order to fit in.

Contributions to HRD practice

The imbalance in the performance of emotion work by men and women in this organization has several implications for this organization, and perhaps others. This organization has had difficulty promoting women into leadership positions. This may be partly due to the emotion work conducted by women because of their perceptions of the organizational culture. They perceive that their emotional inclinations are not valued and, perhaps, that may translate into a devaluing of them as members of the organization. As indicated earlier, women in the Air Force culture downplay feminine, emotional roles in order to highlight their (perceived) more valued roles associated with masculinity (Dunivin, 1988). In other words, perceptions that encoding and decoding emotions (Gallois, 1993; McConatha et al., 1994) are not valued skills may lead some women to suppress what may be key to their ability to perform in leadership positions.

Not only is it possible that emotion work and the perceptions of affective culture would inhibit women from seeking and/or achieving the highest levels of leadership, it is also possible that emotion work has other influences on leadership factors in the organization. Damasio (1994) highlights the critical importance of emotion in cognitively based leadership functions such as decision-making. Not only do leaders need access to their own emotions, but they also need access to the thoughts and feelings of those involved in the decision. However, if those individuals perform emotion work to hide what they perceive as inappropriate emotions, leaders' decisions will not be as effective as they could be.

In addition, a culture that devalues the expression of emotion may disrupt the ability to recruit new members, especially female members. The lack of women in leadership positions, the perceptions about emotion, and findings from more comprehensive studies on gender issues in this organization (see Callahan, 1999) suggest that the culture may not be accepting of women. Thus, both male and female members who subscribe to the "evolving" (Dunivin, 1994) model of culture may grow weary of a culture hostile to women and choose to suspend active involvement in the organization. By failing to include a large segment of society that is increasingly represented in the organization's largest constituency base, the Air Force, this organization may distance itself from the very people it was created to serve. Finally, members may find it difficult to educate a more enlightened public about the importance of air power, a key organizational mission, if they are out of step with the larger culture.

MacArthur's stirring words of "duty, honor, country" may indeed serve as a "rallying point" for military members, in particular when they are engaged in combat. However, the implication of a "combat, masculine-warrior" culture connected to these words may not be effective in the daily operations of an organization affiliated with the military culture. If the organization does not attend to the management of emotional experience and expression conducted by its members, emotion work may contribute to the demise of this organization that is firmly rooted in the core values of "duty, honor, country."

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Mature Behavior in Organizations: Indications of Growth and Learning in the Workplace

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If emotional and cognitive maturity is understood and acknowledged in organizational interactions, then the chances are increased that participants can meet the complex needs of today's organizations. This paper presents a four-stage model of development and links it to organizational learning.

Keywords: Behavioral Indicators, Workplace Learning, Organizational Learning

Some experts believe the only sustainable advantage an organization will have in the future is its ability to learn faster than its competitors (Kapp 1999). Such competitive advantage can be achieved by transforming the organization into a learning organization, providing a stimulating climate for seeking new approaches to perform work. In fact, organizational learning can be developing new knowledge and changing behavior to improve future performance (Barker & Camarata, 1998).

Organizations which have a continuous and enhanced capacity to learn, who acknowledge their human capital, were found by Mariotti (1999) and Kapp (1999) to have an average 17 percent increase in productivity. Part of this can include an increased awareness of developmental growth among members coupled with a relation-based environment.

The purpose of this paper is to develop a model for developmental growth of individuals in organizations and to understand its implication for creating a healthy organization, a high-performing system.

Background on learning organizations

Despite its importance, not all organizations have been able to transform themselves and achieve the characteristics of high-performance systems or learning organizations (Quinn, 1996; Cooper & Schrabraq, 1998; Rashford & Coghlan, 1994). The learning organization does not just happen; conditions must be developed and nurtured for change to occur. Senge (1999) maintains that most change initiatives fail because organizations do not foresee the obstacles that arise naturally wherever growth and learning take place. As organizations mature, do leaders allow employees to mature as they use their successful and unsuccessful experiences as learning opportunities? Do obstacles such as immaturity distort and filter information, thus reducing learning? If maturity (and its lack) is acknowledged in organizational interactions, then participants have a greater chance to meet the complex needs of today's organizations

Conditions in modern organizations sometimes work against the development of maturity. As more information is presented ever more quickly, with chaotic and unpredictable changes, employees find that they must approach work differently. Downsizing, flattening hierarchy, increased competition, globalization, and intensified technology can leave workers with a possible sense of powerlessness and insecurity (Hirschorn, 1999). As a result, employees themselves exhibit behavior inconsistent with organizational learning. For example, Lancaster (1998) and Argyris (1998) found that employees often exhibit immature behavior when threatened or embarrassed (e.g. defensiveness), and this impedes organizations from reaching optimal levels. Such immature behavior may be the result of both personal and organizational factors and may manifest itself on the organizational culture in ways that causes alienation of workers, disenchantment of customers, and encourages individuals to move away from their espoused values (Marcic, 1997). To develop the characteristics of a successful learning organization, workers need to have the emotional development to increase their learning potential as they interact with others, and respond to the continuous changing environment of a learning organization.

Creating a learning environment ought not to be difficult, as research shows individuals come fully equipped with insatiable drive to explore and experiment (Roth & Kleiner, 1995; Erikson, 1982).

Unfortunately, many organizations are oriented predominantly toward controlling rather than cultivating employees' natural curiosity and impulse to learn (Senge, 1999). Many of these employee-organization relationships are based primarily on rational choice theory where each transaction between parties is based on "I will do this for that," effort is exchanged for a known, specific outcome of equal value (Barker & Camarata, 1998). The choice is primarily economic. Employees' focus on behaviors derived from specific duties and tasks assigned to their jobs. By acknowledging maturity levels of participants within organizational relationships, it can encourage individuals to operate from Blau's (1964) social exchange theory. Instead of acting out of economic calculation, individuals benefit one another on the basis of concern for the other's welfare. Blau (1964) asserts that in terms of performance and/or attitudes individuals generally excel when employees base their relationships less on economic or quid-pro-quo transactional basis (more short term) and more on a focus of personal connection with the leader and/or organization (more long term). This supports the conceptualization that higher level of growth and maturity leads to higher levels of productivity and an enhanced learning environment.

This all-encompassing social exchange and developmental growth foundation could be useful in developing organizational learning. An organization can build effective relationships with employees if certain conditions are met of support towards individual maturity or emotional growth embedded in an employee's work life.

Integrating employees and organizations for learning

Gherardi (1999) defines the culture of learning organizations as being action orientated, geared toward creating a type of organization in which learning is maximized through interaction within the environment. In reality, the culture requires individuals to learn and transfer the knowledge acquired from participants to modify structures within the organization, and that learning leads to an improvement in performance (Gherardi, 1999).

In change efforts, participants become fixated on the process of change itself, and often fail to recognize the importance of the human elements, including learning capabilities within the employees (Birkner & Birkner, 1999). Focusing solely on the mechanics of the change process, rather than the people and their needs, can overwhelm even positive and strong individual characteristics (Figure 1). This over-emphasis on organizational structure can prevent and/or discourage individual development and organizational learning. In the learning organization culture, both individual needs and organizational structures need to be in balance to carry out what has been learned, and thus expand learning capabilities and capacity (Fisher & Fisher, 1998; Birkner & Birkner, 1999).

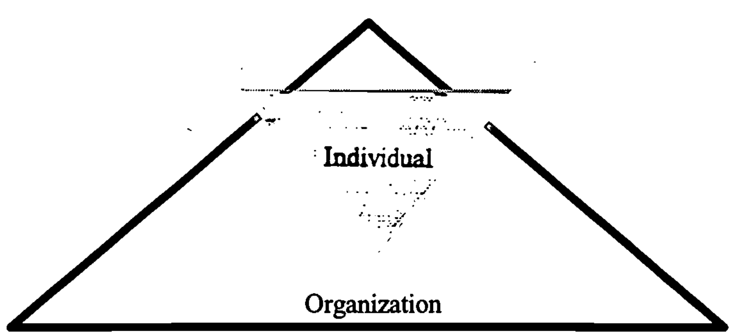

Figure 1: Imbalance of Organizational Structure and Individual Characteristics

It has been suggested that increasing an individual's psychological development puts an organization on a firm foundation of strong character, i.e., ethics, integrity, and honor (Marcic, 1997), which will enable its members to contribute to the organization's learning. It is possible that aggregate employee maturity is a critical factor in the achievement and performance of an organization as a learning organization. As individuals mature they increase their capacity to learn, think, and create. They recognize that they can learn moment by moment, which can turn into wisdom--not just information or knowledge (Johnson, 1999).

Theoretical framework for developmental stages

The first step in evaluating and addressing the impact of employee maturity level on the development and maintenance of a learning organization is to assess an employee's developmental level within the organizational culture. Though much research has been done on developmental stages of organizations (Miller, 1989; Quinn, 1998; Kimberely & Miles, 1981), it has focused on the cycles of the organization themselves, rather than individual members. There is, however, some recognition that organizational learning includes a psychosocial dimension, and that the learning behavior of individuals within groups is significant. Salner (1999) emphasizes the need for individuals to change their cognitive maps, that is, their habitual ways of understanding organizational situations. This research will look, developmentally, at the cognitive-behavioral properties of individuals and their potential to be a skilled contributor to organizational learning as they interact with the organization.

Drawing from the work of Fowler (1981) and Erikson (1982), the 4-stage model presented below (Figure 2) has been developed to provide a developmental framework to assess individuals' level of cognitive and emotional maturity as it relates to organizational behavior. As individuals interact within the organization, behaviors are demonstrated through the following four stages: Egocentric, Protective, Compliant and Dynamism. Each stage is present in some form throughout an individual's experience in the organization, but reaches its own dilemma at a specific time as organizational interaction occurs.

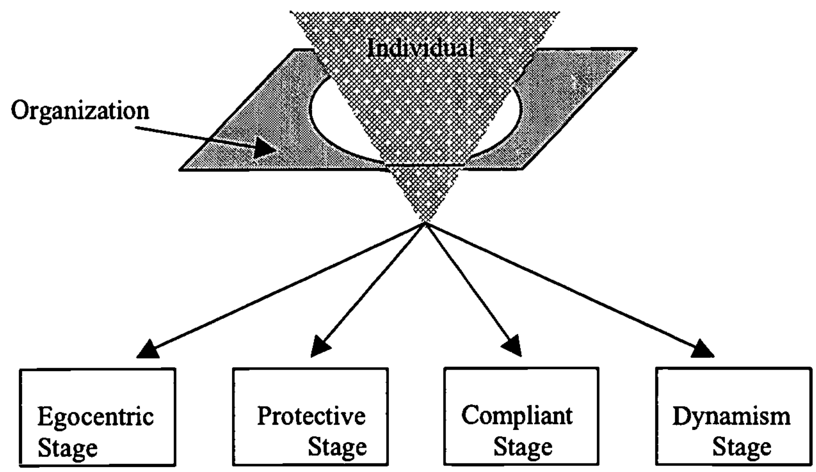

Figure 2: Cognitive and Emotional Maturity as a Result of Individual-Organizational Interaction

Egocentric Stage – Individuals in the egocentric stage are more dependent on the actions of others, have limited ability to differentiate their own perspective and are acutely submissive to those in authority positions. This stage represents a general encounter between the individual's maturing ego and the social world. Members look for consistency, predictability, and reliability in the leaders' actions. A sense of trust is developed in their leaders, and workers show it in their behavior. They learn to trust themselves. As they develop confidence in their abilities, they also develop a faith in the organization and its leaders. During this time when leaders feel anxious, the worker will feel anxious; if the leader feels calm, the worker feels calm. These interactions in turn influence later attitudes. If the worker can develop a favorable balance of trust over mistrust, he/she will develop a core ego strength in this stage or a sense of hope. Hope enables the worker to move forward and enthusiastically confront organizational events despite current and past frustrations.

Protective Stage – The protective stage represents behaviors that are defensive in nature. Individuals see the world in a linear and predictable way, and are often extremely competitive due to a perceived mistreatment by others. Cognitively, they are unable to detect and correct errors in judgement. However, when this happens, leaders do not permit the individuals to enjoy their independence. Instead they train the workers to behave in the socially acceptable way defined by the organization. The battle during this time is between the worker's autonomy and the organization's regulations. When workers insist on correcting a problem in the work place, leaders will try to regulate their choices or behavior. In this stage individuals begin exercising their will, and developing their sense of autonomy within the system. They want to be independent and learn the organization's culture and values on their own. They insist on making their own decisions, even if it means exercising their right to make a mistake. They begin to defy external control. Individuals are also very aware of social expectations and pressures. There is a fear of not looking good in others'eyes. The fear encourages doubt in their abilities and the realization that one is not so powerful after all; that others can control one perform actions much better. It is through the hope developed in the prior stage that workers can learn to adjust to social regulations without losing too much of their initial sense of autonomy. During this stage the leader's role is two-fold. First, without crushing his/her independence, the leader assists the worker as the worker learns accepted organizational behavior. Second, the leader should not break the worker if they show oppositional behavior; or ridicule if they take the initiative to do things on their own. An objective in this stage is to develop the determination to exercise free choice as well as self-restraint. The worker is the one in charge, not the external powers.

Compliant Stage – In the compliant stage power is relinquished to external parties, which resides in the leadership of the organization. There is a fear of being assertive because of losing one's place in the social structure of the organization. This stage may become a permanent place of equilibrium for those individuals whose sense of powerlessness continues to manifest itself in the organizational culture. The danger in this stage is an excessive feeling of inadequacy and inferiority. The compliant stage tends to be a period of calm and stability. However, this is a decisive stage for growth in which individuals master important cognitive and social skills. Individuals begin eagerly learning the useful skills and tools of the larger culture and conform their individual behaviors to the organization. During this time, learning is often informal, and comes from more experienced workers. Workers enter training programs and are asked to master more skills. They learn to do more meaningful work and develop strengths of steady attention and persevering diligence. They are also learning to work and interact with their peers. The successful resolution of this stage leads to a strength Erikson calls competence, the free exercise of intelligence and skill in the completion of tasks, unimpaired by excessive feelings of inferiority.

Dynamism Stage – Individuals in the dynamism stage must withstand a certain amount of frustration. Individuals in this stage can begin to indulge themselves as if they were the one and only individual in the process. This stage is the highest level of development. Creativity, collaboration, listening, sharing resources and rewards within the organizational culture characterize it. Individuals begin to examine the norms and make choices using their judgement. They are able to communicate and share their beliefs while listening and taking into account other's thoughts. This stage is rare because it is a unique way individuals relinquish their power for the sake of a greater purpose. They have a special wisdom that unifies and transforms their environment. They become concerned with developing the next group leaders. They enter into what Erikson calls generativity which refers to the production of things and ideas through work. They teach and guide others by working with individuals to help create a better organization. There is a sense of order to one's place in the organization, and the acceptance of that place. Integrity is developed that says, "Yes, I make mistakes, but given who I am at the time and the circumstances, the mistakes are inevitable."

Implications for HRD

As individuals interact within the organization, they respond based partly on their level of cognitive and emotional maturity. Erikson (1982) believes people obey their own inner laws of development, and creates a succession of possibilities based on their own, as well as others developmental levels. For example, at the protective stage, when maturation occurs, it ushers in a sense of autonomy where individuals can behave independently and make decisions based on their abilities for the good of the company. At the compliant stage, maturation prompts a new interest in discovery, along with capacities for curiosity and new ideas encouraging learning among work groups.

At the same time, the culture of the organization can evolve such that it invites and meets this inn er, maturational succession of potentialities. For example, when the individual at the egocentric stage demonstrates a new degree of self-control, change agents in the organization may consider the individual ready for new skills training. However, the result is sometimes a battle of wills, between the worker and the organizational society, which creates a crisis at that particular period. It can be that the organization is at a lower level of growth than the individual matures to. So whereas managers are exerting tight control, which tends to produce immature behaviors, a particular employee may be searching for more autonomy and growth— finding this environment unsuitable for maturation.

Therefore, there may be lack of fit, either with an immature empl oyee who is put in an empowerment program and begins to feel frustrated and over-whelmed, or the situation where a mature employee is in a rigid top-down command-control environment and starts to suffocate from lack of independence and opportunities for growth.

Our purpose is to continue to try and understand more about these developmental stages and how they affect learning in organizations.

Summary

This paper has presented research in progress to determine how an individual's interactions, work behavior, and attitudes are associated with various stages of emotional development or maturity. Acknowledging how workers move through these stages toward maturity can be an indicator of a successful learning organization. Using this model to provide a framework for measuring individual development will enable organizations to evaluate this critical element and work to develop their human capital into a strong relation-based group of employees, which in turn will promote a successful learning environment.

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Sensation-Seeking Behaviors: Predictors of Job Performance?

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Although sensation seeking has been found to have important relationships with job satisfaction and cognitive performance, limited information exists about its possible relation to workplace learning and job performance. Four service-industry companies were sampled ($\underline{N}$ = 233), and path-analytic techniques were employed to demonstrate that sensation-seeking behaviors can negatively influence workplace learning and technical and interpersonal job performance, as well as job satisfaction. Implications for human resource professionals are considered.

Keywords: Sensation seeking, Job performance, Socialization processes

Various researchers have found the sensation-seeking construct to be meaningfully related to social relationships (Cappella and Green, 1984), openness to change (Bjork-Akesson, 1990), "burn out" (Meier and Schmeck, 1985), life stress (Zuckerman, 1994), job satisfaction and employee intention to quit (van den Berg and Feij, 1991), vocational interests (Zuckerman, 1994), occupational risk taking (Musolino and Hershenson, 1977), and need achievement and cognitive performance (Scroth and Lund, 1993). Zuckerman (1994) called sensation seeking "a trait defined by the seeking of varied, novel, complex, and intense sensations and experiences, and the willingness to take physical, social, legal, and financial risks for the sake of such experience" (p. 27). Thus, an individual possessing a high level of this personality trait would be expected to have a higher need to seek stimulation and novelty, experience different things, and take physical and social risks, all for the sake of maintaining an optimal level of stimulation and arousal. Conversely, a person having a low level of sensation seeking would be expected to have a lower threshold for optimal stimulation and arousal, resulting in less need to undertake risks and experience novel situations.

Sensation seeking has been examined empirically in the psychological and business literature in many absorbing ways, with extremely relevant results to academicians and practitioners alike. However, almost no exploration of its significance to the field of HRD has been undertaken. Knowledge of any relationship between sensation seeking and the workplace learning process and/or job performance could be especially valuable to anyone interested in facilitating learning and enhancing optimal performance.

Review of the Related Literature

In social situations, high sensation seekers excel as they tend to dominate conversation and engage in a great deal of social disclosure, even with strangers (Franken, Gibson, and Mohan, 1990). Thornton, Ryckman, and Gold (1981) found that high sensation seekers tend to select topics of discussion other than those on which they think there will be agreement. The researchers attributed this behavior to the value high sensation seekers place on conflict and differences as positive sources of arousal. In their study of nonverbal behaviors, Cappella and Green (1984) discovered that high sensation seekers were more affiliative in their nonverbal behaviors, such as posture and eye gaze, and emotionally expressive (e.g., more smiles and laughter) because of their propensity toward being more spontaneous and open to novel surroundings and contexts. In essence, high sensation seekers seem to thrive on social contact because of its potential for arousal and to express their desire for social relations through affiliative behaviors.

In a classroom context, Bjork-Akesson (1990) detected a relationship among adolescents between high sensation seeking (using an expanded version of Zuckerman's construct) and openness to varying learning contexts and group activities. She stressed that because high sensation seekers have a higher threshold for stimulation and arousal, they are, in general, less likely to be overwhelmed in novel situations, and do better in such highly variable contexts since they find inconstant situations to be stimulating.

In an experimental study with college students, Scroth and Lund (1993) examined the relationships among need achievement, cognitive performance, and sensation seeking in transient test conditions. This study is a quite a departure from much of the research already presented because it investigated the possibility that sensation seeking could be situational and thus aroused under certain experimental conditions. In this particular study no relationship was found, but this issue should be explored further as there is considerable evidence from the study of similar psychological constructs (e.g., curiosity, anxiety, and anger) that there can be a "state" or "situational" aspect of personality traits. Nevertheless, the researchers ascertained that sensation seeking was positively and moderately related to measures of divergent thinking and creativity, and situational work and mastery achievement. Overall, they reasoned that subjects "who are willing to work hard, desire to perform a task well, and like 'difficult' tasks also tend to be sensation seekers characterized by a preference for unusual experiences, risk taking and dislike of routine" (p. 865).

Meier and Schmeck (1985) explored the relationship between academic "burn-out" and sensation seeking, observing that college students who were low sensation seekers suffered more from burn-out because they were less adept than high sensation seekers in finding ways to vary their college experiences. Similarly, Zuckerman (1994) claimed that low sensation seekers were more vulnerable and reactive to life stress, as their capacity for handling rapid change, ambiguity, and atypical contexts is relatively low.

Investigations into occupational risk taking indicate that individuals in risky occupations, such as air traffic controllers, paratroopers, test pilots, firemen, and policemen are more likely to be high sensation seekers (Musolino and Hershenson, 1977). Further, Zuckerman (1994) reported on correlational relationships between his Sensation Seeking Scale (SSS, a well-studied operationalization of the sensation-seeking construct) and vocational interest using the Strong Campbell Interest Inventory. The SSS was found to be positively related to the interest scales from the "helping professions" (e.g., psychology, social work, teaching, and the practice of medicine). On the other hand, interest in business vocations in which routine transactions predominate (e.g., banking, accounting, and purchasing) were inversely related to the SSS. These relationships make considerable sense: Because high sensation seekers seek out social interactions and find them to be stimulating and arousing, these individuals would find vocations associated with the helping professions more satisfactory.

Finally, in an organizational study conducted in the Netherlands, van den Berg and Feij (cf. Zuckerman, 1994) used a Dutch version of the SSS and measures of work stress and job satisfaction to predict employees' "intent to leave" their jobs. The investigators learned that while job satisfaction was the strongest predictor of the dependent variable, sensation seeking directly predicted an employee's intent to leave as well. The authors concluded that the relationship between sensation seeking and intent to leave reflected the employees' need for variation and change, regardless of their job satisfaction.

Rationale for the Study

Sensation seeking and its related behaviors have relevance in workplace settings because they may be able to predict cognitive performance, employee stress, job satisfaction, and intent to leave. Yet little research has been undertaken to determine their significance in organizational contexts beyond the aforementioned van den Berg and Feij study. For example, little information is available on how sensation seeking affects individual workplace learning, which is especially vital to employee socialization (Ostroff and Kozlowski, 1992). Nor has there been research investigating how sensation-seeking behaviors might influence the ultimate measures of workplace learning, i.e., technical and interpersonal job performance. It is quite conceivable, for instance, that highly sensation-seeking individuals might not be as motivated to acquire the necessary workplace knowledge, to "learn the ropes" of their jobs, if they find them to be boring and monotonous. This lack of learning might in turn negatively influence their job performance. Consequently, what happens when high sensation seekers have monotonous jobs or conversely when low sensation seekers have highly variable jobs? Anecdotal evidence suggests that they are less likely to "fit" into their organizations and that they are much more likely to perform poorly as they become highly dissatisfied. Yet there is no empirical evidence to support this observation.

Therefore, the purpose of this exploratory study was to focus on the sensation-seeking construct and how it might relate to the learning associated with the workplace socialization process and facets of job performance. The results could flesh out previously overlooked factors related to workplace learning and job performance, and contribute empirical support to theoretical possibilities regarding the relationship between sensation seeking and the workplace learning process. The identification and clarification of these relationships could provide human resource development professionals with useful ideas for facilitating workplace learning and enhancing job performance, absolute musts for a change-oriented organizational climate.

Research Questions

The research questions that guided this exploratory study were as follows:

1. What are the relationships among sensation seeking, workplace learning, and job performance?
2. Does sensation seeking influence workplace learning and job performance?
3. What influence does job satisfaction have on the relationship between sensation seeking and job performance?

Method

Participants The cross-sectional sample consisted of 81 women and 152 men. There were 11 females and 24 males who were 17 to 20 years old, 15 females and 62 males who were 21 to 29 years of age, 23 females and 37 males who were 30 to 39 years old, 23 females and 25 males who were 40 to 49 years old, and 9 females and 4 males who were 50 or older. The mean age of the sample was 32.5 years (SD = 8.8).

Most (86 percent) of the participants were Caucasian, 9 percent were African-American, 3 percent were Hispanic, and slightly more than 1 percent were Asian. Almost 64 percent of the subjects earned less than $30,000 per year; only 22 percent of the participants earned more than $40,000 annually. Approximately 62 percent of the sample had at least some college education. Overall, the typical participant was a male Caucasian under the age of 40, with some college education and an annual salary of less than $30,000 per year.

Procedure. Participants were obtained from four well-established, service-industry companies in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area ($\underline{N}$ = 233). A battery of tests, of which the instruments examined in this study were a large part, and demographic data were collected at the participants' places of work, with an overall administration time of roughly 40 minutes. All instruments were paper-and-pencil questionnaires.

Instrumentation. One well-studied, self-report measure of the sensation-seeking construct with four relevant subscales was used in this study. The Sensation Seeking Scale--Form V (Zuckerman, 1979) consists of four 10-item subscales: boredom susceptibility, experience seeking, thrill- and adventure-seeking, and disinhibition. Subjects were asked to indicate whether they "liked" or "disliked" the activity described in each question. Cronbach's alphas of the subscales were .60, .49, .76, and .67, respectively.

The workplace learning (or "socializati on-related learning") measure used was a modified version of the Workplace Adaptation Questionnaire (WAQ; Morton, 1993). This questionnaire was originally a 19-item introspective instrument. We supplemented the job-knowledge subscale with three additional items suggested by Morton's factor-analytic work to add more technically oriented questions to the instrument. For each question, participants were asked to rate their level of agreement ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The first three subscales are concerned with assessing the socialization or learning process at work: establishing relationships (five items), acculturation (five items), and job knowledge (eight items), with corresponding alphas of .85., .86., and .96. The last subscale, satisfaction with learning experiences, is a quite different construct and is not included in the total instrument score. We used this four-item subscale as our operationalization of a kind of employee job satisfaction, that is, learning satisfaction. The internal consistency of the subscale was .81.

Last, the job performance instrument consisted of three two-item subscales (six 10-point Likert items overall). The three subscales assessed overall, technical, and interpersonal job performance. Internal consistencies were .66, .71, and .71, respectively.

Results

After examining the means and standard deviations for each of the measures (see Table 1), all of the research variables were intercorrelated and examined for interesting and meaningful relationships. Table 2 presents the total scale correlations.

Correlations between the variables and their respective standard deviations were entered into a structural modeling statistical package, EQS 5.4 for the Macintosh, and an a priori determined theoretical model (see Figure 1) was tested for statistical fit with the model.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for Measure Subscales

Scale	Subscale	M	SD	
WAQ	Job Knowledge	33.3	4.4	
WAQ	Acculturation	19.0	3.5	
WAQ	Establishing Relationships	21.2	3.0	
WAQ	Satisfaction With Learning Experiences	15.4	2.9	
SSS-V	Disinhibition	4.5	2.4	
SSS-V	Boredom Susceptibility	3.4	2.2	
SSS-V	Thrill and Adventure Seeking	6.2	2.7	
SSS-V	Experience Seeking	5.2	1.9	
TJP	Technical Job Performance		7.1	2.1
IJP	Interpersonal Job Performance	7.8	1.7	

Note. * N = 233

Table 2
Total Scale Intercorrelations

	SSS	WAQ	SLE	TJP	IJP
1	-----	**-.159**	**-.186**	**-.247**	**-.147**
2		-----	**.337**	**.448**	**.421**
3			-----	.093	**.286**
4				-----	**.467**
5					-----

Note. * N = 233; Bold-faced print $p < .01$
1 = SSS; 2 = WAQ, etc.

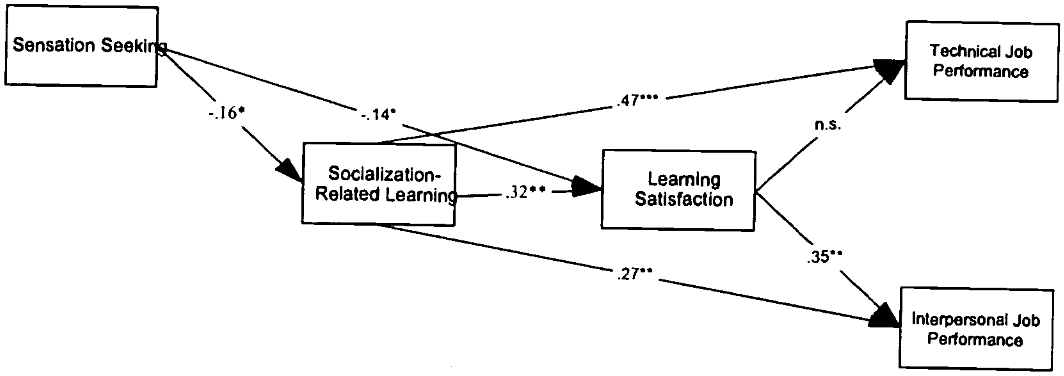

Figure 1. Sensation Seeking to Job Performance Path Model

Conventional fit indexes indicated that the theoretical model fit the data adequately; therefore, the data did not disconfirm the model (Comparative Fit Index = .90; Bollen Fit Index = .90; and McDonald Fit Index = .96. Values of .90 or greater are desirable. See Kline [1998] for an excellent discussion of the various fit indices.)

All but one of the paths were at least statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level, most were significant at the $p < .01$ level. The satisfaction-with-learning-experiences to technical-job-performance path lacked statistical significance, yet we considered this result to be completely plausible when considering the composition of the learning satisfaction subscale. For instance, question 22, "I am satisfied with the support I have received on the job," does not seem to be as closely associated with technical job performance as it is with interpersonal job performance, especially considering our sample of service workers. Perhaps with technically oriented positions such as computer technicians, technical support would be perceived to be more valuable and thus technical job performance would be influenced more significantly. We recommend modifying the subscale to accommodate these observations.

Essentially, our path model lends empirical support to the notion that sensation seeking has a direct negative influence on socialization-related learning and satisfaction with learning experiences, and an indirect, positive effect on technical and interpersonal job performance, mediated alternatively through the socialization-related-learning and learning-satisfaction variables.

Discussion

Sensation seeking was explored as it related to socialization-related learning, job satisfaction, and technical and interpersonal job performance. As expected, sensation seeking had a direct and significant negative influence on the learning associated with the socialization process as well as on satisfaction with learning experiences (our operationalization of job satisfaction). This is in partial support of the van den Berg and Feij study conducted in the Netherlands. The negative relationship between sensation seeking and socialization-related learning was anticipated because when learning the nuances of one's position and the norms, values, and procedures of an organization, a certain amount of conformity is necessary. Certainly, high sensation seekers would not be as likely to prosper in typical service-oriented organizational situations demanding considerable structure and long-term conformity due to their constant need for stimulation. Indeed, the nature of any job would seem to mandate at least some constraint from one's supervisor, for instance, which would likely contribute to lower levels of job satisfaction for the high sensation seeker, and a resulting decline in their job performance. This assertion is supported by our theoretical model. In addition, high sensation-seeking individuals, while adept at handling novel contexts, would not as likely be stimulated and aroused sufficiently by such a learning context over the long periods of time necessary to accommodate fully to a position, the management staff, and an organization.

We have presented empirical evidence that the sensation-seeking personality trait has an important influence on the vital socialization process in which employees use various organizational resources, such as coworkers and supervisors, to learn the subtleties of their positions, and which ultimately influences their job performance. With this particular sample of service positions, high sensation seekers would not be as likely to be as well socialized or to fit into the organizations where the study was conducted, a development that would have a concomitant negative influence on their job performance because organizational policies and expectations would probably not encourage and foster such behaviors. Alternatively, with a sample of police officers, firefighters, and air traffic controllers, we might expect the opposite result: High sensation-seeking behaviors would be encouraged through organizational policies, the fit between the employee and the organization would be more assured, and job performance would be positively affected. Undoubtedly, more research is needed to investigate this possibility.

Human resource professionals should use this information carefully. Although a measure such as the Sensation Seeking Scale might be a predictor of organizational fit, job satisfaction, and job performance, these results are far too preliminary to advocate using this measure as a primary criterion for job selection. Far more interesting is the notion that this information could be used to help professionals facilitate and manage organizational learning, job performance, and employee retention.

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