

Industrial/Organizational Thesis Abstracts

2008 Thesis

Jennifer Ragsdale
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2007 Thesis

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2008 Abstracts

THE IMPORTANCE OF WEEKEND RECOVERY ACTIVITIES AND EXPERIENCES FOR REDUCING SCHOOL-RELATED STRESS, *Jennifer Ragsdale* – The objective of this study was to determine the importance of engaging in recovery activities over the weekend to reduce school-related stress. Recovery activities included resource-providing activities that allow for the replenishment of resources and resource-consuming activities, which create additional demands and further deplete resources. This study was the first to test a model of the recovery process. Two hundred twenty-one undergraduate students completed questionnaires given after taking an exam on a Friday in an Introduction to Psychology course. Follow-up questionnaires were completed on the following Monday. Path analysis using LISREL 8.5 was conducted to determine that a recovery activities model explained the recovery process better than a recovery experiences model. Pursuing resource-providing recovery activities and experiencing feeling recovered was negatively associated with poor well-being and need for recovery at the beginning of the next school week. These results establish the importance of engaging in resource-providing activities, which has implications for a working population. Addressing the recovery activities pursued during off-work time is ultimately more practical than considering the underlying recovery experiences, because activities are more behavioral in nature.

DEMOGRAPHIC DISSIMILARITY AND TURNOVER INTENT: TESTING MEDIATING AND MODERATING VARIABLES, *Matthew Smith* – This study examined the effects of demographic dissimilarity on turnover intent and intervening variables that could potentially mediate or moderate those effects. One hundred seventy-three employees in a Midwestern nursing home completed a survey assessing turnover intent, diversity climate, organizational commitment, procedural justice, and satisfaction with pay and benefits. Demographic characteristics, in terms of race, sex, and age, and information regarding group size were collected through the same medium. Demographic differences concerning race and age, perceptions of diversity climate, and organizational commitment all significantly predicted turnover intent, while no such relationship was found for sex differences. Regression analyses revealed that procedural justice moderated the relationship between age differences and diversity climate. The findings suggest that demographic differences within a work group can have a negative affect on one's decision to remain within their organization. Future research should explore work groups, in relation to their demographic composition, over an extended period of time to better understand group functioning and processes within an organizational setting.

EFFECTS OF PERSONALITY JUDGEMENTS IN PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL, *Aaron M. Stehura* – Performance appraisals are often performed by an observer by detecting relevant behaviors performed by a target person, and using those as the basis to rate that target's performance. As direct observation is often difficult, information is often supplemented with other information gathered about the target, or inferred based on schemas activated by the behaviors that were observed. Similarly, personality judgments are made by an observer detecting relevant behaviors performed by a target person, then using those cues and other situational information to make inferences. The processes of performance appraisal and personality judgment are very similar, and the same observable behaviors could be used in both processes. Behaviors observed may activate schemas, which may then lead to personality judgments and influence ratings made on an employee's performance. The purpose of the current research is to examine the performance appraisal and feedback process to see how personality information about the employee and individual differences in the rater affect the process. It is hypothesized that characteristics of the rater, namely dispositional intelligence and right-wing authoritarianism, and characteristics of the target, self-esteem and need for achievement, will influence how performance appraisal ratings are made. Participants were asked to read performance descriptions of a hypothetical employee that also contained personality information on that employee. They were then asked to rate the performance of that employee and indicate how they would provide performance feedback. Additionally the participants completed measures of dispositional intelligence and right-wing authoritarianism. Overall, results of the study were not supportive of the hypotheses. There were observed differences between the personality conditions on the dependent variables, however these differences were often

inconsistent with the hypotheses, and were often not significant. While the results of the current research may not be significant, it does provide some evidence that individuals do use personality information when engaged in the performance appraisal process, and that individual characteristics of the rater can also influence ratings. Future research endeavors may attempt to better understand how these characteristics of the rater and ratee affect the performance appraisal process.

EFFECTS OF PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS AND RACIAL PROTOTYPICALITY ON ASSIGNING AFFIRMATIVE ACTION BENEFITS, *Kate Unterbom* – Affirmative action policies and their benefits play a

prominent role in public and private organizations. The allocation of these benefits to applicants must be executed so that all eligible parties can take advantage of these benefits. Affirmative action policies can vary in strength or to what extent individuals' demographic characteristics can influence decision outcomes. The "stronger" an affirmative action policy, the more weight it places on demographic information. The eligibility decision is not as straight forward as it seems and there are errors that can affect it. Individuals can use mental shortcuts, like applicant physical attractiveness or facial prototypicality, to aid in their decision making. However, not all individuals use these heuristics to the same degree. There are some individuals who are high on the dimension of need for cognition who enjoy actively thinking through decisions and tend to not use heuristics to bias their decisions. The current research design investigated the influence of affirmative action policy strength, applicant attractiveness, applicant facial prototypicality, and participant need for cognition on the allocation of affirmative action benefits. Undergraduate participants were presented with 18 resume/picture pairs and asked to indicate if the job applicant was eligible for the affirmative action benefit, how confident they were with their eligibility decisions, and how fair they felt their decisions to be. Results indicated that participants were not influenced by the affirmative action policy when making eligibility decisions. Participants were more likely to give affirmative action benefits to applicants with high facial prototypicality. Confidence in eligibility decisions was influenced by applicant facial prototypicality such that applicants with a higher level of prototypicality were seen as eligible for the benefit more often than other groups of applicants. This effect progressed in a linear trend across prototypicality level. Applicant attractiveness influenced decision confidence ratings only for applicants with a high prototypicality level. Decision fairness perceptions were also influenced by applicant attractiveness level. Participants rated their eligibility decisions as more fair for attractive, as opposed to unattractive, applicants. Participant need for cognition level did not predict the use of applicant attractiveness or prototypicality level when rating applicant benefit eligibility. Thus, applicant features can influence affirmative action benefit allocation and decision perceptions while individual difference variables do not exert influence over these decisions.

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A COMPARISON OF INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCE CHARACTERISTICS ACROSS THEORIES OF LEADERSHIP, *Michael R. Kemp* – Given the importance of effective management to the success or failure of an

organization, it is no surprise that leadership ranks among the most studied and debated topics in the organizational sciences (Bass, 1997; Judge & Bono, 2000). If organizations can define and identify the best leadership talent, they will ultimately be more successful in the long-run. The present study explored the relationships of personality, sex, and gender-role orientation with initiating structure, consideration, and transformational leadership behaviors. It was proposed that specific personality traits would be positively associated with different leadership behaviors. These relationships were hypothesized based on the nature of the relevant constructs and how broad or narrow each construct was assumed to be. Additionally, differences in sex and gender-role orientation were expected to be associated with different styles of leader behavior based on the nature of the constructs and the social pressures that accompany gender. Results did not support any of the hypothesized relationships regarding personality, sex, and gender-role orientation. However, by examining how these individual differences compare across disparate leadership criteria, the present study found transformational leadership to correlate highly with consideration ($r = .90, p < .01$), suggesting considerable overlap between these two disparate theories of leadership. Relationships and comparisons of individual differences and leadership effectiveness are discussed along with implications for future research.

MODERATED AND MEDIATED RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PAY-FOR-PERFORMANCE, JOB SATISFACTION AND JOB PERFORMANCE, *Heather Kchodl* – One of the most tangible outcomes employees

receive at work is their monetary compensation. There are many different systems that can be utilized to deliver compensation to employees. Pay-for-Performance, the practice of linking monetary rewards to individual performance, is becoming increasingly popular. The system of linking pay closely to behavior follows from reinforcement theory that people will perform at higher levels when they are positively rewarded for that behavior. The contingency of the reward to the behavior is an important component to motivating behavior. Ninety-six participants working in various sales

positions were studied, via survey, in order to examine three individual characteristics that affect the relationships between Pay-for-Performance, job performance, and job satisfaction. Relationships were analyzed using correlations, moderated and mediated regression. Work locus of control and risk preference were shown to mediate the relationship between Pay-for-Performance and job satisfaction. All relationships concerning job performance were not supported, likely a result of insufficient variability in performance variable. In addition to the hypothesized relationships, organizational justice relate to Pay-for-Performance and job satisfaction. Finally, one aspect of expectancy theory, motivational force, was also examined. Motivational force is a combination of expectancy and valence.

THE IMPACT OF TELEWORK ON RELATIONSHIPS WITH COWORKERS, *Sara J. Langford* – With the amount of technology ever increasing in our society, it is no wonder that occupations are going to change as a result (Bailyn, 1988). Telework is being offered as a work option more and more often every day (Bacon, 1989; Luukinen, 1996; McKee, 1998; Nairn, 1997). It can make employees' lives simpler and without a commute (Henderson & Mokhtarian, 1996; Kitamura, Nilles, Conroy, & Fleming, 1990; Koenig, Henderson, & Mokhtarian, 1996). However, there is only a narrow body of research on the topic. Much of that research focuses on the 'perceived' impact of telework (Frolick et al., 1993; Khan et al., 1997; Olson, 1982; Raney, 1985; Reinsch, 1997; Tung, Palvia, Heuei, Ye-Meng, & Yee, 1996) and how it impacts relationships with supervisors (Duxbury et al., 1998; Duxbury & Neufeld, 1999; Olson, 1982; Reinsch, 1997). The point of this study was to expand on that body of research by measuring actual feelings of isolation, organizational justice, and coworker relationship quality. Participants included an eclectic group of teleworkers and in-office workers from across the U.S. Results indicate that in-office workers had better relationships with fellow in-office workers than with teleworkers. The relationship between in-office worker and teleworker was not related to the amount of technology available or the length of time teleworking, but was related to how long the coworkers had worked together prior to the onset of telework. Contrary to expectations, coworkers who were more dependent on one another actually had a higher quality of relationship. Although any sex differences in coworker relationship quality were not significant, women actually had slightly better relationships with coworkers than men. Telework did not seem to have any relationship to isolation or organizational justice. Finally, while frequency and level of technology did not moderate most relationships, level of technology did approach significance when interacting with telework status on isolation. Contrary to expectations, in-office workers reported more isolation than teleworkers when technology level was very high.

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INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES AND WORK DOMAIN VARIABLES AS MODERATORS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT AND PERSONAL AND WORK OUTCOMES, *Misty M. Bennett* – Work-family conflict, which is a form of role conflict between one's work and family life, is growing interest for researchers given its detrimental effects to individuals, their families, and their organizations. Although a good deal of research has examined how work-family conflict and its various strains have received little attention. The present study examines 10 moderators of the relationship between work-family conflict and 4 strains (well-being, family satisfaction, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions). The moderators come from both aspects of the individual (self-efficacy, work self-efficacy, family self-efficacy, need for structure, locus of control, and family locus of control) and aspects of the workplace (support from managers and administrators, availability of family benefits, and flexibility of work scheduling). Data were collected via an online survey that was administered to employees of a large public school district in the Midwest (N = 213). Direct relationships were tested among work-family conflict and its outcomes and moderated regression analyses were run on the 10 moderators. The direct relationships between work-family conflict and its outcomes were all significant and in the proposed direction; work-family conflict was negatively related to family satisfaction, well-being, and job satisfaction, and work-family conflict was positively related to turnover intentions. Moderated regression results showed that self-efficacy, work self-efficacy, and support from managers and administrators buffered the relationship between work-family conflict on strains. This indicates that offering training or counseling on improving self-efficacy or encouraging managers to provide support could help employees cope with work-family conflict. Additional implications for organizations and future directions for research are discussed.

RELATIONS BETWEEN MORAL REASONING ABILITY AND PERFORMANCE, SATISFACTION WITH JOB AND WORK PARTNER, *Joshua Paul Johnson* – Does the ability to reason in a moral dimension have an effect on the job performance of Emergency Medical services personnel? This study tested the effects of two types of Moral Reasoning orientations, Justice and Care, and partnership fit in a population of paired EMS employees. The effects of differential pairing on the moral reasoning trait was proposed to influence the employee's job satisfaction, satisfaction with work partner, supervisory performance ratings, self-assessment of team functioning. Results showed that Justice reasoning was correlated with self-assessed team performance ($r = .24, p < .05$). Care reasoning correlated with patient

care performance ($r = .41, p < .01$) and self-assessed team performance ($r = .32, p < .01$). Both Care ($r = .27, p < .05$) and Justice ($r = .34, p < .01$) were correlated with job satisfaction. Variance between partners in Care reasoning was found to be a significant predictor of patient care ($r = -.42, p < .01$) and both worst ($r = .34, p < .01$) and best ($r = .27, p < .01$) member effects on the Care orientation correlated with performance. The results add to the study of moral reasoning research in an applied and realistic setting.