customers/projects etc.
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LOVING ONE'S JOB: CONSTRUCT DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL WELL-BEING

E. Kevin Kelloway, Michelle Inness, Julian Barling, Lori Francis and Nick Turner

ABSTRACT

We introduce the construct of loving one's job as an overlooked, but potentially informative, construct for organizational research. Following both empirical findings and theoretical developments in other domains we suggest that love of the job comprises a passion for the work itself, commitment to the employing organization, and high-quality intimate relationships with coworkers. We also suggest that love of the job is a taxonic rather than a dimensional construct – one either loves their job or does not. In addition, we propose that loving your job is on the whole beneficial to individual well-being. Within this broad context, however, we suggest that loving one's job may buffer the effect of some stressors while at the same time increase vulnerability to others. These suggestions provide some initial direction for research focused on the love of one's job.

Loving one's job has been frequently identified in maxims about work as both a criterion for and a predictor of vocational success. As a criterion for success, individuals are advised to discover (Cassidy, 2000) or rediscover (Boyatzsis, McKee, & Goleman, 2002) their passion. People seeking career advice are told that loving their job is its own reward, and the adage attributed to Confucius "find a job you love and you'll never work a day in your life," expresses this sentiment well. As a predictor of success, loving a job has been tied to task and financial performance (Baum & Locke, 2004), as well as life happiness. Steve Jobs, Chief Executive Officer of Apple Computers, remarked in his address to Convocation at Stanford University:

> You've got to find what you love. And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. (Jobs, 2005)

Despite the centrality of the "love of one's job" construct in the folklore of work, there has been little conceptual or empirical consideration of the nature of loving your job. Our goal in this chapter is to offer an initial conceptualization of the construct by drawing on the existing organizational literature. In doing so, we strive to achieve two major goals. First, we offer a definition of loving your job that is grounded in both theoretic analysis and empirical data. In doing so, we articulate three components of love of one's job and detail a structure of love of one's job. Second, we spell out the connections between "truly" loving your job and individual well-being.

DEFINING LOVE OF THE JOB

In their review of the literature dealing with romantic love, Rempel and Burris (2005) defined love neither as a relationship, a form of behavior, nor an emotion. Rather, they conceptualized love as a "motivational state in which the goal is to preserve and promote the well-being of the valued object" (p. 299). Although it is clear that most of the available research in the literature on love has focused on interpersonal love, it is equally clear that there is nothing in the definition of love that precludes a focus on other targets. Indeed, Rempel and Burris (2005, p. 309) explicitly noted that their definition "allows love to be experienced toward any valued object." Consistent with this definition, Ahuvia (2005) suggested that objects and activities are the focus of love as frequently as are people, and made reference to the possessions and activities loved by consumers. In a similar

vein, Fournier (1998) had argued earlier that consumer brands can be likened to active relationship partners. Therefore, it is plausible that several valued objects can reasonably be considered objects of love.

Notwithstanding this earlier speculation, whether a job can constitute such a valued object remains a critical question. We draw on several lines of evidence to answer in the affirmative. First, the historical record identifies paid employment as a central aspect of human experience throughout the development of civilization (Applebaum, 1984, 1992; Kelloway, Gallagher, & Barling, 2004; Pahl, 1988). Paid employment is associated with numerous manifest (e.g., pay) and latent (e.g., time structure) consequences (Jahoda, 1982) for the individual, and the absence of paid employment has been linked to deleterious consequences for individuals and society since at least the beginning of the Industrial Revolution (Burnett, 1994; Feather, 1990; Jahoda, 1982). Indeed, recent meta-analytic evidence (Paul & Moser, 2009) suggests that unemployment is related to several harmful mental health outcomes. Evidence gleaned from longitudinal studies and natural experiments points to a causal relationship between unemployment and distress. Second, the notion of a job lies at the intersection of work (i.e., purposive activity that is directed at the production of a valued good or service; Kelloway et al., 2004) and employment (i.e., the context in which work is performed; Kelloway et al., 2004). As a target for love, the "job" is conceptualized broadly and encompasses both the intrinsic (i.e., the work itself) and extrinsic (i.e., the context of the work) aspects of paid employment. Third, at a societal level, we often see holding a job as a terminal value that outweighs other considerations. For example, despite data suggesting that youth employment can result in a host of adverse consequences for young people, society (including both parents and children; Furnham & Thomas, 1984; Green, 1990; Greenberger & Steinberg, 1986; Mortimer, Finch, Dennehy, Lee, & Beebe, 1994; Phillips & Sandstrom, 1990) continues to value job experience and to encourage young people to obtain a "job" early in life (for a review see Kelloway & Barling, 1999). Finally, and of considerable import for the current presentation, there is clear evidence that individuals value their jobs, as is evident when they develop a sense of ownership over their jobs and even come to view the job as a form of valued property (Gordon & Lee, 1990; Kelloway, Barling, & Carroll, 1998). Thus, we suggest that there is sufficient evidence to conclude that a job constitutes a valued object, even a perhaps a possession (Gordon & Lee, 1990), that may be the focus of love.

What is love in the context of "the job"? Two qualitative studies suggested remarkably similar definitions of the experience of loving your

job. Investigating the experiences of high-achieving women, (Richie, Fassinger, Linn, & Johnson, 1997, p. 139) noted that a large number of their respondents talked about loving their work. The researchers identified three dominant "themes" that characterized the participants' career development, namely passion for the work, persistence, and connectedness. Similarly, after interviewing women who loved their jobs, Gordon (2006) also identified three themes characteristic of their accounts. First, each of the women interviewed took pleasure from her job activities. Second, each of the women felt good about her reasons for working. Finally, each of the women liked and at the very least respected the people with whom she worked.

We suggest that these accounts parallel conceptualizations and empirical research on the components of interpersonal love. In his "triangular theory of love," Sternberg (1986, 1987) suggests that interpersonal love consists of passion, commitment, and intimacy. In the context of interpersonal relationships, passion refers to the desire for union with another person and includes a variety of sources of motivation for such a union (Sternberg, 1986). These motivations may include, but are not limited to, sex, self-esteem, affiliation, nurturance, and self-actualization to name a few. According to Sternberg (1986), commitment consists of two fundamental choices. It is both a choice to select one particular person from the array of available alternatives, and a decision to maintain that relationship over time. The third dimension of Sternberg's (1986) triangular theory of love is intimacy, and refers to the feelings of closeness, connectedness, or bondedness with another person. Intimacy promotes a desire to enhance another's welfare, the experience of mutual happiness, having a positive regard for and being able to count on another person.

Given that the dimensionality of passion, commitment, and intimacy components of love has been found to be robust across different samples (Falconi & Mullet, 2003; Lemieux & Hale, 2002), Sternberg's tripartite model will provide the basis for the conceptualization of the love of one's job. Specifically, we propose that love of one's job comprises the experiences of passion for one's work (Sagie & Koslowsky, 2000), affective commitment to the employing organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997), and a sense of intimacy with people at work (Brehm, Miller, Perlman, & Campbell, 2002). Consistent with Sternberg's theory and the available evidence, our model of love of the job recognizes the nature and interrelatedness of the three components of passion, commitment, and intimacy, and in doing so we identify three separate foci: the work one does, the organization within which one works, and the people with whom one works. We suggest that

recognition of the interrelatedness of passion, commitment, and intimacy gains increased importance in light of the observation that workers may love their work but dislike the conditions under which the work is performed (Kusnet, 2008). We begin by separately considering the three components inherent in our model of the love of one's job and then turn to the question of how these components combine to form love of one's job.

PASSION FELT FOR ONE'S WORK

I never realized I was in love. And I was in love – I was in love with cooking…. And it was grueling work. Fantastic work. It's basically 24 hours a day, 400 meals per serving, three and four times a day.
— Executive Chef (Oprah Winfrey TV show, February 24, 2003).

In Sternberg's (1986) triangular theory of love, passion involves an intense feeling of unity with and attraction for another person, and is motivated by several factors. In the context of one's job, passion for one's work may be construed as a unity with and attraction for one's work, also motivated by several factors, many of which may overlap with interpersonal passion including motivations for self-esteem, self-actualization, and the nurturance of one's career.

The past few decades have seen considerable theorizing and research about people's involvement in their work. Whether cast within the framework of job involvement (Kanungo, 1982), engagement (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002), participation in decision making (Sagie & Koslowsky, 2000), or vigor (Shirom, 2003), the available data show that being more involved in one's work generally results in higher levels of both productivity and well-being (Barling, Kelloway, & Iverson, 2003; Harter et al., 2002; Parker & Wall, 1998; Wall, Corbett, Martin, Clegg, & Jackson, 1990). However, individuals can feel more than involved in their work: they can be passionate, engaged, excited, or enthusiastic (Sirota, Mischkind, & Meltzer, 2005) about their work. Passion for one's work goes well beyond most, if not all, current models that reflect different nuances of what might generically be called "job involvement."

Another job-related attitude that has been widely examined is that of job satisfaction (Spector, 1997). Job satisfaction describes how content individuals are with their jobs, and various aspects of their job (Spector, 1997) including their rate of pay, work responsibilities, variety of tasks, promotional opportunities, the work itself, and coworkers. Job satisfaction is considered to be an individual's attitude toward one's work experience,

and as such, includes both cognitive and affective components (Wright, Cropanzano, & Bonett, 2007). Like job satisfaction, love of job is a positive emotional and attitudinal reaction to personal job-related experiences. However, the construct of job satisfaction (and dissatisfaction) does not capture the full range of affective responses to one's work (Van Katwyk, Spector, Fox, & Kelloway, 2000), and conversations with workers (e.g., the executive chef cited above) provide anecdotal support for this suggestion. Indeed, despite advances toward understanding employee's job-related attitudes that have been made in the literature, job satisfaction remains a relatively poor predictor of both individual well-being and job performance (Bond & Bunce, 2003; Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985; Wright & Cropanzano, 2000).

Several points regarding the present definition of passion for one's work bear special focus. Notwithstanding the use of the term "passion," there are no sexual undertones to this component in our model of the love of one's job. Instead, we adopt Vallerand et al.'s (2003, p. 757) definition of passion as "a strong inclination toward an activity that people like, that they find important, and in which they invest time and energy." This conceptualization is consistent with numerous formulations that suggest a motivational component to passion and link passion to achievement (Baum & Locke, 2004; Frijda, Mesquita, Sonnemans, & Van Goozen, 1991; Richie et al., 1997).

Moreover, the use of the term "passion" in the context of one's job conveys the intense longing for one's work. Perhaps as is the case with romantic love, the longing for the object of the love of one's job can best be understood from the consequences experienced when deprivation occurs. The absence of the focus of one's passion (i.e., the specific work) would result in a negative psychological and psychosomatic state, as is evident from research on unemployment (Barling, 1990; Jahoda, 1982; McKee-Ryan, Song, Wanberg, & Kinicki, 2005; Paul & Moser, 2009). The depiction of passion as longing for one's work is also consistent with Ashford, Lee, and Bobko's (1989) model of job insecurity, in which one of the core characteristics is the threat of losing psychologically meaningful work (Barling & Kelloway, 1996).

Finally, passion involves an affective component. Vallerand et al. (2003) distinguish between obsessive and harmonious passion, which differ in how the focal activity is integrated into personal identity. In brief, harmonious passion results from freely choosing and valuing an activity. Research shows that unlike obsessive passion, harmonious passion is associated with individuals' hedonic and eudaimonic well-being (Philippe, Vallerand, &

Lavigne, 2009). Reflective of harmonious passion, organizational theorists have identified job involvement as reflecting a psychological identification with one's job (Rabinowitz & Hall, 1977; Saal, 1978) and as an indicator of context-specific mental health (Warr, 1987). In contrast, obsessive passion results from being forced or pressured to engage in an activity (Vallerand et al., 2007), possibly as a result of the contingencies involved. Reflective of obsessive passion, researchers have begun to document the negative correlates and outcomes associated with workaholism (Bonebright, Clay, & Ankenmann, 2000; Porter, 1996).

Thus, in our model, a passion for the job comprises high levels of healthy engagement with, involvement in, and excitement stemming from the work itself. People who are passionate about their work will look forward to it upon waking each day, choose to engage in their work rather than other activities (e.g., recreation), voluntarily work overtime, and express considerable enjoyment and fulfillment when engaged in their work. This view is consistent with empirical research identifying the importance of employee engagement (Harter et al., 2002) and participation (Sagie & Koslowsky, 2000) for subsequent organizational outcomes.

COMMITMENT TO THE EMPLOYING ORGANIZATION

Commitment is another of the three core dimensions of love identified by Sternberg (1986). In his view, commitment reflected a shift from the decision that one was in love in the short term to the intent to continue a particular relationship in the longer term. Similarly, Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) defined commitment as a force that binds an individual to a course of action. Moving beyond a simple "intent to remain" on a particular course of action, extensive research on organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979) has expanded this view to include possible bases for this intent.

The most prominent conceptualization of organizational commitment is Meyer and Allen's (1997) three-component model, which specifies that people can choose to remain with their organization because they want to (affective commitment), feel that they have to because of a lack of available alternatives (continuance commitment), or believe that they should (normative commitment; Meyer, Jackson, & Maltin, 2008). Based on their meta-analysis, Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvarin (2005) concluded that the

various forms of commitment studied in organizational behavior in fact share a common, underlying psychological construct, with continuance commitment being one of the few exceptions (others are calculative and union commitment).

Our model of love of one's job explicitly focuses on affective commitment to the organization. Research findings show consistently that affective commitment is associated with several positive individual and organizational outcomes. Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, and Topolnytsky (2002) conducted a meta-analysis of the outcomes associated with different types of commitment. Consistent with studies reporting positive relationships between affective commitment and various outcomes associated with work attitudes and job performance (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin, & Jackson, 1989), they found that affective commitment was associated inversely with turnover and absenteeism, and positively with performance outcomes such as job performance and organizational citizenship. In contrast, continuance commitment is associated negatively with job performance (Cooper-Hakim & Viswesvarin, 2005; Meyer et al., 1989), and the consequences of normative commitment are moderate at best – a pattern that replicates findings from research on the nature and meaning of marital commitment (Adams & Jones, 1997; Johnson, Caughlin, & Huston, 1999). Thus, our model extends Sternberg's original formulation in suggesting that the basis of commitment (i.e., affective commitment as opposed to normative or continuance commitment), rather than simply the decision to remain, is a critical component of loving one's job.

Equally important, affective commitment may be central to individuals' well-being. In the same meta-analysis cited above, Meyer et al. (2002) found an inverse relationship between affective commitment and well-being, as reflected by lower levels of self-reported stress and work–family conflict. This is consistent with research suggesting that affective commitment is associated with lower levels of self-perceived stress at work (Begley & Czajka, 1993), and greater parental and community involvement (Kirchmeyer, 1992). Indeed, Warr (1987) went further than viewing well-being as an *outcome* of commitment, and identified affective commitment to the organization as a *form* of context-specific (i.e., work-related) well-being.

One of the strongest correlates of affective commitment is that of job satisfaction (Meyer et al., 2002). It has been suggested by Meyer et al. (2002) that this correlation may be partially attributable to the fact that global measures of satisfaction often include items referencing the individual's satisfaction with the organization as a whole. The relationships between individuals' satisfaction with other aspects of work and commitment are far

weaker. This may suggest that job satisfaction does not fully capture the intensity of emotional and attitudinal experiences that may best relate to one's decision to remain affectively committed to their organization. In the present conceptualization, we propose that a person who is affectively committed to their organization is more likely to love their job.

INTIMACY WITH PEOPLE AT WORK

I love my job so because I come into contact with so many wonderful people.
                    – School janitor (Oprah Winfrey TV show, February 24, 2003).

Acknowledging the importance of high-quality personal relationships at work is by no means new. Their importance had been emphasized systematically as early as the results of the Hawthorne Electric Studies (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939) and the Tavistock Coal Mining Studies (Trist & Bamforth, 1951) – an era in which social needs were seen as dominating individuals' motivations to work (Schein, 1980). Around the same time, Maslow drew specific attention to the need for love and belongingness in his need hierarchy (Maslow, 1944), which was influenced by his view of human degradation in the Second World War and his own personal experiences at work (Maslow, 1965). More recently, Baumeister and Leary (2000) suggested that forming social attachments is a fundamental human need that people will pursue under most social conditions and that feeling a sense of belongingness has strong effects on emotional patterns and cognitive processes. Various current streams of research (Gersick, Bartunek, & Dutton, 2000; Jehn & Shah, 1997) add to our understanding of the need for positive social relationships at work. Consistent with Sauter, Murphy, and Hurrell's (1990) framework of the psychosocial factors that make up healthy work, a great deal of data support the suggestion that positive relationships with coworkers are associated with reduced strain (Beehr, Jex, Stacy, & Murray, 2000; Fry & Barker, 2002; Johnson & Hall, 1988; Koeske & Koeske, 1989), enhanced job satisfaction (Ducharme & Martin, 2000; Roxburgh, 1999), and improved performance (Barrick, Stewart, Neubert, & Mount, 1998). Certainly, data consistently shows the negative effects that accrue to well-being when belongingness needs are thwarted (Twenge, Baumeister, Tice, & Stucke, 2001; Twenge, Catanese, & Baumeister, 2003).

The importance of relationships in the workplace is frequently acknowledged, but is not often the primary focus of research (Hodson, 1997). However, the available data suggest that the quality of relationships in the

workplace is predictive of citizenship behaviors (Settoon & Mossholder, 2002), perceptions of the work environment (Klein, Conn, Smith, & Sorra, 2001), as well as group cohesion and job performance (Mullen & Copper, 1994). Moreover, the voluminous research findings on social support at work also show consistently that the various dimensions of social support (e.g., emotional, informational, instrumental, appraisal) are associated with increased productivity and individual well-being (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Frese, 1999).

Interactions among coworkers can take many forms. Ferris et al. (2009) present an integrative, stage-based model of the development of work relationships. Initial interactions are likely to reflect aspects of instrumentality, affect, and respect. Across four stages, relationships expand and increase in intimacy to ultimately reflect qualities such as trust, loyalty, and flexibility, in addition to instrumentality, affect, and respect. The extent to which expectations are met influences progression in these stages, as individuals increasingly value the relationship in and of itself rather than as vehicle toward some end (Dwyer, Schurr, & Oh, 1987).

Kram and Isabella's (1985) categorization of peer relationships to some extent reflects the stage-based notion presented by Ferris et al. (2009). Peer relationships within organizations range from informational to collegial to special (Kram & Isabella, 1985). Information-based peer relationships are low-demand interactions in which both parties benefit from the sharing of information. Collegial peer relationships offer emotional support and feedback. They are characterized by moderate levels of trust and self-disclosure. Special peer relationships are the most intimate, take the longest to develop, and are characterized by a high level of self-disclosure and self-expression. While all of these organizational relationships can offer career-enhancing functions, collegial and special peers also provide psychosocial support such as confirmation, emotional support, personal feedback, and friendship.

Using the construct definition of the overall affective orientation derived from interacting with coworkers, Hain and Francis (2006) developed and tested a measure of coworker relationships. They found that positive coworker relationships directly influenced job satisfaction, which in turn was associated with improved emotional and physical well-being.

Reflecting more intense workplace relationships, evidence suggests that workplace friendships contribute positively to the experience of work. The Gallup poll of employees across the world shows that a major characteristic of a great workplace is the opportunity to have a best friend at work (Based on Gallup Research (2009), What makes a good workplace?). Perceived

opportunities for friendship at work have been directly associated with such positive outcomes as job satisfaction and job involvement (Riordan & Griffeth, 1995). Beyond friendship opportunities, the quality of workplace friendships also influences important outcomes. Friendship quality might be reflected in socializing outside of work, feeling that you can confide in a coworker, and trusting a coworker (Nielsen, Jex, & Adams, 2000). For example, high-quality relationships were positively associated with job satisfaction among some university faculty and staff (Winstead, Derlega, Montgomery, & Pilkington, 1995). Validation studies on the Workplace Friendship Scale, which incorporates both friendship quality and friendship opportunity, suggest that dimensions predict outcomes such as affective comments, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions (Nielsen et al., 2000)

Beyond their influence on individual well-being and attitudes, positive coworker interactions also promote organizational functioning. Based on ethnographic observations, Hodson (1997) suggested that coworker relationships promote effective organizational functioning via four mechanisms. First, coworker relations promote occupational socialization; for example, apprentice models of entry into a field. Second, positive coworker relationships contribute to solidarity within an organization. Third, supportive coworker relationships help individuals in cases where they deem it necessary to resist those in authority. Last, coworkers help to affirm group identities, for instance by engaging in rituals surrounding events such as birthdays. Taken together, these functions make coworker relationships an important aspect of job satisfaction, positive relationships with management, and the sense of having meaningful work.

Arguably, although intimacy within the context of a loving relationship includes constructive social interaction experienced as closeness and connectedness to another person, intimacy also goes further in terms of affective intensity. As Sternberg's (1986) triangular theory of love suggests, intimacy includes the willingness to advance the well-being of the other, feelings of positive respect for the loved one, and cherishing the other's place and role in one's own life. Within the workplace, such intimacy would be apparent in relationships that enable employees to share salient work-related and personal issues in confidence, reflecting a trust in others. Indeed, trust is an element of the special peer relationship as articulated by Kram and Isabella (1985) and high-quality workplace friendships as assessed by the Workplace Friendship Scale (2000). Trust is generally defined as "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another" (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998, p. 395). Trust is a primary

dimension of relationship quality (Settoon & Mossholder, 2002), and a defining quality of positive relationships in the workplace (Pratt & Dirks, 2006). The available data suggest that trust plays an important role in the workplace influencing both well-being (Harvey, Kelloway, & Duncan-Leiper, 2003) and performance (Dirks, 1999). In studies of interpersonal relationships, trust is directly linked with love (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985).

The Structure of Love

Thus, we define love of one's job as comprising passion for the work itself, affective commitment to the organization, and intimate relationships in the workplace. In the foregoing review, we have suggested that each of these individual components is, in itself, predictive of well-being. However, the fundamental premise underlying our model is that the love of one's job is superior in a predictive sense to any of its three components alone. Testing this premise requires that one first specifies how these three components are combined – that is, how does one operationalize the construct of love of the combined – that is, how does one operationalize the construct of love of the job? We suggest that there are at least three viable alternatives: a common factor approach, an interactional approach, and a taxonic approach.

Viewing the components as indicators of a common factor is consistent with the notion that each of them is focused on some aspects of work (the nature of the work as passion; the organization itself as commitment; and people at work as intimacy). In this sense, our operationalization of the three component model of the love of the job is similar to the way in which core self-evaluations (Judge, Bono, Erez, Locke, & Thoresen, 2002) comprising several different elements (i.e., self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability) can be viewed (Judge & Bono, 2001; Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998). Similarly, the construct of positive psychological capital (or "PsyCap," defined as the sum of hope, optimism, resiliency, and self-efficacy) has been operationalized in this manner (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2006). However, it is possible that this approach fundamentally confounds the contribution of the individual components (i.e., passion, commitment, and intimacy) with the higher-order construct (love of the job). Moreover, an additive approach implies that a high level of one component (e.g., passion) may compensate for a low level of another (e.g., commitment). This additive compensatory approach does not reflect the original intent of Sternberg's model that requires the presence of all three components to define what he terms as consummate love.

A second possibility is that the most appropriate conceptualization comprises the interaction of intimacy, passion, and commitment, and that operationally it is the statistical interaction of the three elements that predicts variance in well-being, over and above any variance attributable to the individual components. This approach is consistent with Sternberg's (1986) approach in which he identifies types of love defined in terms of low and high scores on each of the dimensions (e.g., being high on commitment and intimacy but low on passion is indicative of friendship). One advantage of this approach is that unlike the common factor approach described above, true love of the job requires high levels of passion, intimacy, and commitment. Nonetheless, operationalizing love of the job as a three-way interaction is a questionable choice as the detection and interpretation of such interactions is subject to a number of constraints (Dawson & Richter, 2006). Defining love of the job as a three-way interaction between the components may result in a model that is unlikely to ever be empirically validated as a result of the methodological difficulties in detecting interactions.

Operationalizing love of the job as an interaction also introduces considerable complexity into the model that is not intended in our formulation. For example, Sternberg identifies eight different categories of relationship resulting from a 2 (passion) × 2 (commitment) × 2 (intimacy) taxonomy. However, rather than being interested in all possible combinations of the three constituent elements, we are really interested in only two groups of individuals: Those that love their jobs are defined as individuals who have passion for the work, commitment to the organization, *and* intimate relationships with coworkers, versus those who do not. Following this conceptual definition, we anticipate that love of the job would manifest empirically as an individual who scores "high" on measures representing these three constituents. Any other pattern (i.e., scoring low on all three dimensions or high on one dimension and low on the other two) constitute the group of individuals who, in our definition, do not love their job. In essence then, we suggest that love of the job is either present or not for each individual.

This is a taxonic (Meehl, 1992, 1995) definition of love of the job comparable to the use of diagnostic categories in medical practice. Taxonic constructs are almost entirely overlooked in organizational research in favor of dimensional and continuous representations. Indeed, although the practice of dichotomizing continuous data was once well accepted, this procedure is now typically identified as a methodological error that biases statistical tests (MacCallum, Zang, Preacher, & Rucker, 2002). However,

these same authors note that dichotomous representations may be appropriate when a series of well-conducted taxometric analyses support the taxonic nature of the construct. In essence, the recommendation is simply that the operationalizations of the construct should match the empirically verified latent structure of the construct (Ruscio & Ruscio, 2002).

Techniques for identifying taxonic constructs are well-developed (Ruscio, Haslam, & Ruscio, 2006; Schmidt, Kotov, & Joiner, 2004), and provide an approach not often used in industrial/organizational psychology for operationalizing constructs. In the most common forms of taxometric analysis that follow from the seminal work of Meehl (1992, 1995), taxometric methods typically use a form of sliding cut kinetics in which the covariance between two variables is calculated and plotted at all possible levels of a third variable. Evidence for the existence of a taxonic construct is given by a sharp bend in the graph line at the point dividing the taxon and the complement. Although early implementation of the method was hampered by reliance on visual inspection of plot lines, more modern implementations rely on the calculation of fit indices to assess the validity of the taxonic model.

Details of implementing the taxometric method can be found in other sources (Ruscio et al., 2006). However in relation to the current focus, we assert that love of one's job is a taxonic construct – one either loves one's job or does not. We suggest that this definition comprises an empirically verifiable hypothesis, and addressing the latent structure of the construct "love of one's job" is a primary task for future research.

LOVE OF THE JOB AND WELL-BEING

Love of the job comprises a combination of the amount of passion one has for the work itself, one's degree of affective commitment to the employing organization, and the extent to which one has trusting intimate relationships with coworkers. We suggest that having true love of one's job, that is simultaneously having high passion, high commitment, and high intimacy, has a beneficial effect on individual well-being. Two lines of evidence support our suggestion.

First, there are data that show that each of the individual components of love are associated with well-being; in some cases, the findings are job specific. With respect to passion, harmonious passion (but not obsessive passion) is associated both with well-being and diverse aspects of performance

(Philippe et al., 2009; Vallerand et al., 2007). Passion for one's work is also associated with well-being, while an addictive relationship with one's work is negatively associated with psychological well-being. Organizational commitment is also associated with well-being (Wiener, Muczyk, & Gable, 1987). That said, overcommitment to the organization is predictive of negative personal outcomes (Kinman & Jones, 2008). However, these findings are not uniform across different types of organizations or work contracts (Bernhard-Oettel, Cuyper, Berntson, & Isaakson, 2008). For example, cross-sectional results show that being committed to one's clients, but not one's agency, is positively associated with well-being in the short term; however, if employees are reassigned to different clients, such commitment is negatively associated with well-being in the longer term (Galais & Moser, 2009). Intimacy is associated with lower psychological symptomatology (Schreiber, 2001). Specific to the work context, positive coworker relationships are associated with reduced job stress, strain, and burnout (Beehr et al., 2000; Johnson & Hall, 1988).

Second, the positive association of emotions and well-being would suggest that it is beneficial for individuals to love their jobs. In particular, we suggest that loving one's job enables an individual to reconceptualize many potential stressors in the workplace as challenges. In the context of romantic love, researchers have generally suggested that there are positive health consequences of being in a long-term romantic relationship (Berry & Worthington, 2001) – a suggestion that is consistent with the models specifying the health effects of positive emotions (Frederickson, 1998; see also Lazarus & Cohen-Charash, 2001). Esch and Stefano (2005) drew a clear link between love and positive emotions, suggesting that in doing so, the phenomenon becomes amenable to scientific enquiry. Certainly the available evidence would suggest strong associations between interpersonal love and health. For example, feelings of love or affection are associated with both improved cardiovascular response and positive endocrinal changes (Grewen, Anderson, Girdler, & Light, 2003; Light, Grewen, & Amico, 2005).

We have described above how loving one's job contributes to well-being. On the other hand, it is also possible that loving one's job may make a person *more* vulnerable to stressors that threaten the loss of the beloved job. That is, individuals whose job security is threatened (e.g., by layoffs, restructuring) may suffer a compromise to their health (Ashford et al., 1989). Although the data suggest a generally positive health effect of being in love, others have noted the potential for love to be stressful in and of itself (Esch & Stefano, 2005). Considering the maintenance or dissolution of a relationship, some have pointed to both positive and negative experiences

associated with being in love (Kemper & Bollogh, 1981), particularly noting that when a relationship is "going badly, a variety of health effects are reported" (Kemper & Bollogh, 1981, p. 84).

· Conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 1998) provides an explanation as to why those who love their jobs may be particularly vulnerable to stressors that threaten their work. According to conservation of resources theory, individuals work to obtain, maintain, and protect valued resources, any threat to which can be harmful to well-being. For those who love their job, their job content, colleagues, and organizations are valued resources that promote well-being. Indeed, recent findings suggest that access to these resources promotes positive change in individual well-being (Christie & Barling, 2009). In contrast, a threat to that job is in essence a threat to a multipronged set of valued resources that contribute substantially to health and well-being. Such a threat may lead to stress.

We suggest that these findings parallel those in the broader organizational literature. For example, Schmidt (2007) describes two processes through which commitment is thought to moderate the effects of stressors on well-being. In one model, those who are more highly committed to the organization may experience the most negative effects if laid off (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). In essence, the suggestion is that more highly committed employees are more vulnerable to the adverse effects of layoff decisions because their increased involvement in the workplace enhances their vulnerability. In the second model, commitment is hypothesized to buffer the effect of stressors on well-being (Begley & Czajka, 1993; Schmidt, 2007; Siu, 2002).

In a similar vein, we postulate that individuals who love their jobs may be both buffered from and more vulnerable to stressors in the workplace. Love of the job is anticipated to act as a buffer against many of the day-to-day stressors entailed in working. Individuals who love their job are expected to be less affected by stressors such as role overload (Harvey et al., 2003). At the same time, individuals who love their job may be more vulnerable to stressors that threaten the existence of the relationship of the individual and the job. Threats to job security or potential changes in the nature of the job may be particularly difficult, and have negative consequences for the health of individuals who love their job.

AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

While the propositions advanced here await empirical scrutiny, the research agenda identified has the potential for continuing the move

toward a more positive focus for organizational behavior, one that identifies and appreciates the intense positive emotions associated with the experience of work, and describes the plausible antecedents and outcomes of loving one's job. Pursuing the structure, antecedents, and outcomes of the love of one's job will provide a more balanced perspective in organizational behavior, and consistent with the goals of positive psychology, help to focus attention on positive, valued subjective human experiences that have the potential to buffer individuals from illness and enhance their well-being and personal fulfillment (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Over and above identifying the nature and outcomes of the love of one's job, our conceptualization of the love one's job will enable us to confront other interesting questions, and we identify several such questions here. However, in doing so, we make no specific propositions in recognition of the more preliminary nature of these issues.

First, despite widespread and long-standing beliefs that job dissatisfaction would predict serious illness, there is no compelling empirical support for this notion. We suggest that the failure to support this notion results from the lack of emotional depth and intensity that is reflected in current models and measurements of job dissatisfaction (Fitness & Fletcher, 1993), but could be captured more aptly in the hatred of one's job. There is currently no focus on the nature or consequences of hating one's job, but there are indications from research on close relationships that love and hate are separate emotions (Fitness & Fletcher, 1993). We would expect that the simple absence of the three core characteristics of the love of the job (passion, commitment, and intimacy) would not be sufficient to result in hating one's job. Sternberg (2003) has proposed a conceptual model of hate that is derived from the triangular theory of love. His model of hate comprises several correlated components, namely disgust, devaluation and diminution, and anger or fear. Notwithstanding the absence of empirical evidence, the extent to which the model might provide the basis for an understanding of why people might hate their jobs is compelling. Following Fitness and Fletcher (1993), if hating one's job is conceptually distinct from loving one's job, a separate consideration of its nature, antecedents, and outcomes becomes warranted. Indeed, recent statistical developments (e.g., latent curve modeling; Christie & Barling, 2009) make it possible to subject questions about the dynamic development and consequences of the love of the job to empirical scrutiny.

Second, a fundamental assumption underlying a social system that emphasizes monogamy is the idea that it is not possible to love more than

one person simultaneously, raising two separate but related questions with regard to the love of one's job. First, can individuals who hold more than one job simultaneously love them both equally and simultaneously? This is a critical question given the growing number of individuals who find themselves facing this situation (Barling & Gallagher, 1996). A second question is whether loving one's job might limit or prevent the ability to love another individual, simultaneously and equally. Answers to questions such as these might provide the boundary conditions for the positive consequences of loving one's job.

Although we acknowledge that these scenarios might not be comparable given the nature of the love of one's job and the relational nature of the love of another individual, we argue that these questions are relevant because the love of one's job is based on a relationship between the individual and the job. If the love of one's job is to have any meaning, might this imply that the love of one's job is antithetical to loving someone simultaneously?

There are two separate literatures that might provide some guidance in answering this question. First, given the central role of commitment within the love of one's job construct, the long-standing debate whether dual commitment to company and union is at all feasible might be instructive. Results from studies on dual commitment have been inconsistent, showing a positive (Gottlieb & Kerr, 1950), a negative (Barling, Wade, & Fullagar, 1990), or no relationship (Sherer & Morishima, 1989) between commitment to the company and the union. The most appropriate conclusion from this research (Barling, Fullagar, & Kelloway, 1992) is that where there is no conflict between the focal organizations, dual commitment is possible; when conflict exists between the union and the company, unilateral commitment is most likely (Fullagar, Barling, & Christie, 1991). Second, the voluminous, empirically based literature of work–family conflict generated over more than two decades might also be instructive. Research shows consistently that work–family conflict affects the individuals concerned, those in close proximity to them (family members, coworkers), their organizations, and their communities (Bellavia & Frone, 2005).

Embedded in the findings from these two different areas, and the research questions raised, is the assumption that the love of the job may under some circumstances have harmful effects. Yet lost in this literature are a set of findings suggesting that role accumulation may be good for one's health, that is, well-being increases as the number of roles a person holds accumulates (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). Like the findings on dual commitment, data suggest that work and family roles may be conflictive, but do not necessarily need to be. Thus, while these issues await empirical evidence, we

suggest that the love of one's job need not preclude an individual from loving more than one job simultaneously, and in the same way loving more than one person is feasible.

Third, the ideas presented so far are consistent with the notion that the love of one's job is associated with well-being in a linear manner. In contrast, the possibility that the love of one's job may be harmful to well-being would suggest that this relationship may be curvilinear in nature and ought to be investigated. Certainly notions that overcommitment can be detrimental to well-being (Kinman & Jones, 2008), or that individuals who love their jobs the most are especially vulnerable in the face of layoffs (Ashford et al., 1989) opens up a viable set of questions for future research.

A fourth avenue for future research is to examine the nature of the relationship between job satisfaction and loving one's job. Earlier we suggested that the love of one's job will be related to but empirically separable from job satisfaction. We posit that the relationship between job satisfaction and the love of one's job can best be characterized conceptually as existing on a continuum of affective intensity. In other words, job satisfaction would be a necessary, but insufficient condition for experiencing the love of the job. This conceptualization would have significant measurement implications, in that the most appropriate approach to modeling this relationship might not be to demonstrate the lack of a relationship between job satisfaction and love of the job, but to determine whether the data would fit a Guttman-type scale, reflecting a continuum of affective intensity.

Fifth, people holding certain jobs (e.g., portfolio workers whose attachment to an organization would be tenuous by nature, lone workers, or employees engaged in dirty work) might be precluded from loving their job as opportunities for experiencing passion, commitment, and intimacy would be limited at best. Nonetheless, it is possible that opportunities for fulfilling the three components might come from unexpected sources (e.g., lone workers might experience intimate relationships with people external to their organization, such as customers or suppliers). Therefore, research focusing on such groups will be needed to test the boundaries of the model proposed here. This is critical if this model of the love of the job is not to be specific only to those situations compatible with a traditional organizational context.

We save what is perhaps the most fundamental question for last, namely, what is the nature of the construct of the love of one's job? Earlier, we suggested that at least three conceptualizations of the love of the job are possible, namely, a common factor approach, an interactional approach,

and a taxonomic approach. While we initially favor a taxonomic approach, we acknowledge that the most appropriate answer to this question will be data based. A comprehensive approach to answering to this question will include tests of the nature of the construct as well as its predictive validity.

CONCLUSION

The notion that people can and do love their job has largely escaped theoretical and empirical examination. A greater focus on the more intense positive emotions that individuals have toward their jobs offers a perspective that has the ability to trigger new ways of looking at the nature of work experiences, reinterpret existing research findings, and spark new research. Organizational researchers have the opportunity to help employees thrive and become personally fulfilled through their work experiences (Luthans, 2002). Given that most people spend much of their lives in some form of employment, a better understanding of the love of one's job, its antecedents, and consequences has important implications for organizational functioning, as well as individuals' well-being at work and in life.

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QUALITATIVE METHODS CAN ENRICH QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH ON OCCUPATIONAL STRESS: AN EXAMPLE FROM ONE OCCUPATIONAL GROUP ☆

Irvin Sam Schonfeld and Edwin Farrell

ABSTRACT

*The chapter examines the ways in which qualitative and quantitative
methods support each other in research on occupational stress. Qualitative
methods include eliciting from workers unconstrained descriptions of
work experiences, careful first-hand observations of the workplace, and
participant-observers describing "from the inside" a particular work
experience. The chapter shows how qualitative research plays a role in
(a) stimulating theory development, (b) generating hypotheses, (c) identi-
fying heretofore researcher-neglected job stressors and coping responses,
(d) explaining difficult-to-interpret quantitative findings, and (e) providing*