

Importance of Success Goals and Their Relationship to Job Outcomes for Managerial Women and Men

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This study examined six dimensions of life success and three affective job behaviors of 454 managers in Southeast Florida. Results showed that contrary to stereotypes and previous research, male and female managers were strikingly similar. Personal fulfillment is most important to both genders, followed in diminishing order of importance by family relationships, professional fulfillment, security, contribution to society, and status/wealth.

Individuals may value one measure of success more than another, but what they value most becomes a guiding principle in their lives (Rokeach, 1968). Values may vary between individuals and groups, but they tend to function similarly for people in two ways. First, values are formed by individuals' observations and reactions to their environment (McClelland, 1985), and second, values shape current behavior as well as future attitudes (England, 1967; Huisman & Kosc, 1982; Rokeach, 1968).

If it is true that values shape current behavior and future attitudes, values of success likely shape managers' strivings toward success and their attitudes about their job and career. The purpose of this study is to investigate what managers value most in terms of success goals, and how those values may be related to the managers' attitudes toward such work-related variables as job satisfaction, job involvement, and propensity to

leave the organization.

Success in life is often equated with work success, particularly to traditional measures of success such as income and promotions (Korn, 1988; Kotter, 1982; Luthans, Rosenkrantz, & Hennessey, 1985). But previous research also showed a link between nontraditional/non-work measures of success and work behaviors (Chusmir & Parker, 1990; Derr, 1986; Gattiker & Larwood, 1986).

In order to broaden the context of success from work alone to one's total life experience, Parker and Chusmir (1990, 1991) developed and validated a general measure of how workers evaluate six dimensions of life success. Four of the six dimensions appear to be most related to work factors--status/wealth, professional fulfillment, personal fulfillment, and security. The other two--family relationships and social contribution--are less clearly related to work activity. Contrary to commonly-held beliefs, personal fulfillment was rated by respondents in their study as the most important success factor in life, followed in declining order of importance by family relationships, security, professional fulfillment, contribution to society, and finally, status/wealth. Workers in the original study were at all levels in the organization. Because values are known to change from one culture to another, the present study extends the Parker Chusmir (1990) findings by looking at gender differences among a sample of women and men managers.

There is strong empirical evidence from both the success and values literature that women and men may have different expectations about success and may respond to those expectations in different ways (Chusmir & Parker, 1990; Crandall, 1969; McHugh, 1975). Because society assigns women and men different social roles, they develop a different sense of what is important. Prework socialization for women traditionally encourages social relationship, whereas socialization for males concentrates on competition and achievement.

In the Chusmir and Parker study of success strivings (1990), the two genders varied significantly in how important they viewed several dimensions of success in their lives. Women attached more importance to family relationships, personal fulfillment and security than did men, and less importance to status/wealth. They were similar in the way they valued personal fulfillment and security. Terzella (1986) found that women rated personal satisfaction and fulfilling relationships as more important than job or career success. Values were found to differ by gender in several studies including those of high school students (Feather,

1984), college students (Beutell & Brenner, 1986; DeVito, Carlson, & Kraus, 1984), and adults (Gilligan, 1982; McClelland, 1985; Rokeach, 1973).

On the other hand, the role-centered perspective--leaning on social learning theory (Mischel, 1968)--suggests that individuals who are in similar roles have similar value systems (Fagenson, 1990). The theory argues that similar roles make similar demands on the individuals in those roles. To meet these different demands, individuals would need to call upon similar criteria (values of success) on which to base their behavior. At work, particularly in management situations of similar stature and level, society no longer expects or wants different behavior or values from women and men. The demand for similar behavior suggests that social learning will occur to the extent that work values will be the same for managerial women and men. Empirical evidence confirms the similarity of values among women and men managers (Boulgarides, 1984; Boulgarides & Rowe, 1983; Powell, Posner, & Schmidt, 1984; Stevens, 1983), among women and men accountants (Kaufman & Fetters, 1980), and among black and white managers (Watson, 1974). Therefore, it was expected that:

H-1: Female and male managers will not differ significantly from each other in how they assess the importance of the six dimensions of life success.

While female and male managers may assess the importance of the six dimensions in a similar manner, we propose that the degree to which each gender sees the dimensions as important (the strength of the value) may differ. It is likely, for example, that because female managers may have had to face discrimination and other barriers to a degree greater than their male counterparts, they may place a greater level of importance on one or more of the success measures. Also, society has established strong social norms against men's disclosure of personal information about themselves, especially to strangers (Derlega & Chaikin, 1976). Women, on the other hand, grow up in an environment that encourages them to express their feelings and emotions more freely, directly, and openly than men (Hennig & Jardim, 1977). According to self-disclosure theory, women in general tend to disclose information about themselves more readily than men (Basow, 1986), and that difference has been confirmed in empirical research, particularly when the disclosures concern personality (Derlega, Durham, Gockel, & Sholis, 1981). Furthermore, the "Keep-

cool" maxim encouraged in men by society, frequently requires denial of vulnerability (Stechert, 1986). This suggests that men more than women might avoid admitting the full importance of a success goal. In terms of this study, men might assign lower importance scores to the work and non work-related dimensions. For the above reasons, it was expected that:

H-2: Female managers will score significantly higher than male managers in status/wealth, social contribution, family relationships, personal fulfillment, professional fulfillment and security.

Job involvement and job satisfaction are important ingredients in work-related success (Chusmir, 1985; Hackman & Lawler, 1971; Sims, 1981). Job involvement reflects the importance of work to the individuals's self-worth (Lodahl & Lekner, 1965), and therefore is likely to be correlated with measures of life success that reflects self-worth at work (Parker & Chusmir, 1990). High job involvement may bring financial or career success that in turn can provide opportunities to achieve success. High job satisfaction is an indication that the job is fulfilling intrinsic needs (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) such as personal fulfillment or growth (Gallup & Gallup, 1986; Gattiker and Larwood, 1988), and other less tangible rewards (Parker & Chusmir, 1990). If it is true that scores on the various life success dimensions are correlated with job involvement and job satisfaction in a positive direction a logical assumption is that they probably are associated in a negative direction with propensity to leave the organization (Chusmir, 1985).

For the above reasons, it was expected that:

H-3: Life success scores of both female and male managers will be positively correlated with job satisfaction and job involvement, and negatively correlated with propensity to leave.

This study is based on information obtained voluntarily from 454 managerial respondents (231 women and 223 men) in Southeast Florida. Ten full-time working students enrolled in an M.B.A. program in a major urban university in the same geographical area received permission from their organizations to administer a survey instrument to fellow workers. When approached by their co-worker, subjects voluntarily agreed to participate in the study. Because women hold a disproportionately low

percentage of management positions, it was necessary to administer the instruments at a number of different companies to obtain a sufficiently large number of female subjects. Managerial respondents represented a variety of organizations in several industries and economic sectors including retail (49), health care (49), government (42), banking (64), insurance (24), education (30), hospitality/hotel (20), and accounting (30). Because participation was voluntary, true random sampling was not possible, but those distributing the questionnaires were instructed to seek participation from as wide a range of people as possible, specifically to include people who differed in age, tenure, gender, and type of management work performed.

Respondents averaged 36 years of age and 13 years with their present organization. Forty-seven percent of the respondents designated themselves as low-level managers, 44% as middle-level managers, and 9% as top-level managers. Men and women were almost equally represented in both lower and middle-to-upper-level groups. Almost 47% had begun or completed an advanced college degree; 40% had an undergraduate college degree, and 13% had no education beyond high school. Fifty seven percent of respondents were married at the time of the survey, but 14% were previously married or currently separated. Only 29% were never married, and these were found mainly among respondents who were under 29 years of age.

Participants were asked to complete anonymously a questionnaire designed to investigate the research hypotheses and questions. Several blocks of data were obtained in the survey to examine relationships between ratings of the various dimensions of life success, several forms of job-related attitudes, and demographic variables.

Life Success Measures Scale

The Life Success Measures Scale (LSMS) is a 42-item self-report survey containing questions related to six theoretically distinct dimensions of life success: Status/Wealth, Social Contribution, Family Relationships, Personal Fulfillment, Professional Fulfillment, and Security. The latter two dimensions are measured by five items each; the other four are measured by eight items each. As described in an earlier study (Parker & Chusmir, 1990), the LSMS was developed to measure success according to criteria in addition to income and promotion measures often used in studies of individual success. Construct validity for the LSMS instrument

is supported by internal consistency (alpha ranged from .67 to .87 for the six subscales) as well as factor analysis showing that the six success factors are empirically distinguishable from one another. Temporal stability for the instrument was examined by readministering the instrument to 62 respondents after a three week interval; the coefficient of stability for the subscales ranged from a high of .89 for family relationships to a low of .58 for security. Respondents were asked to rate each of the 42 life success items according to how each "best represents its importance to you" on a five point Likert-type scale anchored by 5 = always important to 1 = never important. The instrument is scored by totaling responses for each of the six dimensions and dividing by the number of items in the scale to permit comparison between and among the six dimensions.

Job Involvement

Job involvement was measured by the short form of the Lodahl and Kejner (1965) scale. Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with six four point Likert-type statements about their involvement with their work. The short form of this scale has a reported reliability coefficient of .73 and this administration yielded a .71 coefficient alpha. According to Lodahl and Kejner (1965), the job involvement questionnaire is expected to reflect the importance of work to the person's self-worth. It was used here to explore relationships between the six dimensions of life success and individuals' involvement with paid work.

Job Satisfaction

Defined as an affective response resulting from one's job (Locke, 1976), job satisfaction was measured according to the average score resulting from participants' responses to four seven point Likert-type questions developed by Hoppock (1935). Internal consistency of the scale reportedly ranges from .76 to .89 (McNichols, Stahl, & Manley, 1978). Scale reliability was .85 for the 454 participants in the current study.

Propensity to Leave

Lyons' (1971) three item index asks respondents to rate their current job on a five point Likert-type scale, with a high score indicating a high

propensity to leave the job. A negative correlation between any of the six dimensions of life success and propensity leave indicates that high evaluation of a success dimension is associated with low propensity to leave the job. A coefficient alpha of .78 has been reported for the three item Lyons scale (Brief & Aldag,1976); this study yielded an alpha of .86.

STATISTICAL TESTS

To test Hypothesis 1, a Protected Fisher's Least Significant Difference Test was performed on the difference between the adjusted means for women and men. This analysis tests for mean differences between the six success factors. Means were adjusted for other variables that may themselves be gender-related, such as age, tenure, education level, marital status, management type, and management level.

Analysis of Covariance (ANACOVA) was employed to test hypothesis 2. ANACOVA adjusts the posttest means for any group differences that may influence subjects' values of success. For variables to be treated as covariates, they must be significantly correlated with the dependent variable, and they must not be highly correlated among themselves (Stevens, 1986). Prior to running ANACOVA, the covariates were regressed against each other and each of the six dimensions between age and tenure--greater than .70--tenure was dropped. The covariates were demographic variables: education level (7 categories from 1 = some high school to 7 = terminal degree), marital status (never married and previously married), management type (0 = manager of people and 1 = manager of projects), management level (categorized as low, middle, and upper), and age. The F test reported in the results of ANACOVA was based on Type III sums of square. Type III sums of squares or partial sums of square are used when the treatment groups differ in size and when ordering effect in the model is not desired.

Partial correlation coefficients were used to indicate the direction and to test the magnitude of relationships between affective work behaviors and values of success for women and men. Partial correlations were selected because this statistic evaluates the relationship between values and life success while controlling for other variables they may be gender related. The control variables were the same as the demographic variables used in the ANACOVA.

RESULTS

Demographic and average participants' rating on the three affective work behaviors are reported in Table 1 both for the total sample and by gender. Table 1 shows that men and women did not differ significantly on either job satisfaction or propensity to leave scores. Scores on job involvement were significantly different between women and men. However, after controlling for demographic variables, those differences disappeared (women $M = 2.48$ vs. men $M = 2.54$, $t = 1.48$). As would be expected, men's age, education level, and length of time with the company was significantly greater on average than women's. Although not reported in Table 1, a higher percentage of men than of women were married and held a middle or high level management position. Using t-tests as a basis for analysis, there were no gender differences between women and men on the type of managerial tasks they performed.

Based on the role centered perspective of social learning theory, it was hypothesized that female and male managers would not differ on how they assessed the importance of the six dimensions of life success. Based on the results of the Protected Fishers Least Significant Difference Test, Hypothesis 1 was supported. For both women and men, the mean status/wealth score was significantly smaller than all other scores, the mean personal fulfillment score was significantly higher than all other scores, and the contribution to society mean score was lower than the average family relationships. Consistent results of women and men show that they assessed the importance of the life success dimensions the same.

The second hypothesis predicted that there would be significant gender differences on the degree to which each gender values the six dimensions of life success (after adjusting for demographic variables). Expectations were that due to either challenges faced in the work place or to a greater willingness to disclose personal information, female managers would report greater emphasis on values of success than male managers. Adjusted mean scores (least square means) for women and men on life success are reported in Table 2.

As was expected, women on averaged assigned more importance to five of the six life success factors. Female managers assigned significantly more importance than their male counterparts to contribution to society, family relationships, personal fulfillment, professional fulfillment, and security. There was no significant difference, however, in the degree to which female and male managers viewed status/wealth.

Table 1**Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Selected Demographic Variables And Affective Work Behavior Measures by Gender**

Variable	Gender			t	p
	Total	Female	Male		
Demographic Variables					
Age	38.87 (9.63)	34.84 (8.80)	36.94 (10.34)	2.28	.02
Education	3.70 (1.22)	3.54 (1.19)	3.87 (1.24)	2.87	.004
Tenure	2.74 (8.97)	11.68 (7.78)	13.85 (9.96)	2.50	.01
Affective Work Behavior					
Job Satisfaction	5.13 (.85)	5.14 (.82)	5.13 (.88)	0.18	n.s.
Job Involvement	2.48 (.46)	2.43 (.44)	2.53 (.47)	2.42	.01
Propensity to Leave	2.25 (.87)	2.25 (.85)	2.26 (.89)	0.12	n.s.

Note: Standard deviations are in parentheses

Table 2**Corrected Means, Standard Errors, and Rank Ordered Importance of Life Success Measures by Gender**

Life Success Scale	Women			Men			t	p
	Rank	Mean	SE	Rank	Mean	SE		
Status/Wealth	6	3.42	.05	6	3.43	.05	.01	n.s.
Contribution to Society	5	4.17	.04	5	3.94	.04	13.04	.0003
Family Relation	2	4.40	.05	2	4.18	.05	9.21	.002
Personal Fulfillment	1	4.66	.03	1	4.52	.03	9.90	.001
Professional Fulfillment	3	4.32	.03	3	4.10	.04	17.03	.0001
Security	4	4.28	.04	4	4.06	.04	15.89	.0001

Hypothesis 3 predicted that life success scores would be positively related to job satisfaction and job involvement and negatively related to propensity to leave for both women and men respondents. In Table 3, Pearson partial correlation coefficients are reported for the total sample and by gender.

For the total sample, job satisfaction was positively correlated with professional fulfillment and negatively correlated with security. Job involvement was positively correlated with status/wealth and professional fulfillment, and negatively correlated with family relations. Propensity to leave was correlated negatively to professional fulfillment.

Although many of the hypothesized relationships did not exist between the success dimensions and affective work behaviors for the total sample

the differences for women and men produced interesting results. For women job satisfaction was positively related to family relations and professional fulfillment, but the men job satisfaction was positively related only to professional fulfillment. Results suggest that women who place more value on family relations and professional fulfillment are more satisfied with their job, while men who place more value on professional fulfillment are more job satisfied.

Table 3

Correlations Between Life Success Dimensions and Affective Work Behaviors, Controlling for All Other Variables

	Life Success Dimension					
	S/W	SC	FR	PeF	PrF	S
Job Satisfaction						
Women	-.03	.13	.17*	-.09	.18**	-.12
Men	.07	.00	.02	.04	.30***	-.17**
Total	.01	.05	.07	-.01	.25***	-.14**
Job Involvement						
Women	.03	.11	-.12	-.16*	.22	.00
Men	.20**	-.08	-.23**	-.01	.31***	-.05
Total	.13**	.00	-.20***	-.09	.26***	-.03
Propensity-to-Leave						
Women	.02	-.11	-.19**	.21**	-.28***	.07
Men	-.03	-.02	.03	-.04	-.16*	-.05
Total	-.02	-.05	-.06	.06	-.23***	.00

* p < .05

** p < .01

*** p < .001

Level of job involvement was positively related to how both the women and men managers valued professional fulfillment. However, the other values of success were related differently to job involvement for the two genders. For the men, job involvement also was positively correlated with status/wealth and negatively with family relations. For the women, job involvement also was correlated only with personal fulfillment, in a negative direction.

For the total sample, professional fulfillment was found to be significantly and negatively related to propensity to leave, i.e. the more managers valued professional fulfillment, the less likely they would want to leave the job. Although this was true for both women and men, the correlation coefficient was almost twice as great for women as for men. This suggests that when the female managers placed a high value on professional fulfillment they were less likely to leave their jobs than the male managers who placed high value on professional fulfillment. The results, however, were not consistent on the other life success dimensions. Women who placed more value on personal fulfillment and family relations were less likely to leave their job, but this was not true for the managerial men in the study.

DISCUSSION

Results of this study show a striking similarity in what female and male managers value in terms of life success goals. Although the female executives tend to score higher across all success scores than the male executives, both genders rank order the six success dimensions in identical ways. Personal fulfillment is most important to both genders, followed in diminishing order of importance by family relationships, professional fulfillment, security, contribution to society, and status/wealth. After controlling for demographic variables, the two genders are also similar in degree of job satisfaction, job involvement and propensity to leave the organization.

It is interesting to note that in the Chusmir and Paper (1990) study of women and men in general, results showed that the two genders differed substantially in how they ranked the six dimensions of life success. The present study, however, looked at a managerial sample and found little or no differences. This lends support to arguments made by proponents of

social learning theory who contend that the situation is a greater predictor of behavior (and values) than personality (and gender). Female and male managers at the same level perform similar roles, find themselves in a similar same environment and situation, and apparently also possess similar values of success and affective work behaviors. This suggests that discrimination against women may be based on false assumptions of differences and therefore may be dysfunctional to organizations that erect barriers to the promotion of women to management jobs.

The two genders differ substantially, however, in the relationship between what they value most and their attitude toward their jobs. Most of these differences are consistent with traditional work and socialization assumptions. For men, job satisfaction appears to be related to how little value they place on security and how much value they place on their professional status. Women tend to view job satisfaction in broader, more holistic terms. They are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs when they have positive family relationships, can contribute to society, and are recognized professionally. Gender differences in job involvement relationships with success are also substantial. Status/wealth and professional fulfillment are important to male managers' level of job involvement, as well as a low value placed on family relationships. The female managers became job involved most often when they valued personal fulfillment lightly and professional fulfillment seriously. In terms of whether the managers want to stay on or leave their jobs, both the men and women tend to stay when professional fulfillment is important, but for the women other factors are also important, e.g. strong family relationships equate to staying on the job and strong personal fulfillment desires equate to a propensity to leave the job. These results have important implications for organizations desirous of reducing costly managerial turnover. Understanding how managers define success can develop a greater awareness of and sensitivity to the needs of the management team. Turnover among male managers may be reduced by offering security and economic opportunities, while turnover among female managers may be reduced by offering them opportunities to improve family relationships and to make a contribution to society.

A case may be made that while a substantial number of the correlations between the six life success dimensions and affective work behaviors are significant, the magnitude of the correlations are relatively small, varying from a low of $r = .13$ to a high of $r = .31$. This implies that the practical significant of the differences may be minor, since those differ-

ences only account for a range of 1 1/2% to 9 1/2% of the total variance. Research by Rosenthal and Rubin (1982), however, introduced a new theory of effect size (Binomial Effect Size Display) that resulted in the researchers' contention that improvement in an actual success rate (such as the improvement rate in predictability) may be exactly the same amount as the correlation "r" value. As applied to this study--if Rosenthal and Rubin are correct--the improvement in predictability percentage might be relatively meaningful, ranging between 13% and 31% rather than between 1 1/2% and 9 1/2% when considering the relationship between specific life success dimensions and affective work behaviors.

Despite the relatively large and diverse managerial sample group, it should be noted that generalizability of results is limited. The sample was one of convenience and was confined to a fairly narrow geographical area. since values are known to change by region and culture, values of success expressed by managers in this study may differ from those in other regions and in cultures other than the U.S. Further study using a national or cross-cultural, randomly-selected sample is suggested.

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