

DO OUR LINKAGES TO OTHERS AND A SENSE OF LOSS WHEN WE LEAVE A COMMUNITY MEDIATE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR CAREER GOALS AND SUCCESS?

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the relationships between two types of career goals (i.e., self-selected goals and goals to which employees commit on behalf of their organizations), embeddedness (i.e., links and community/sacrifice) and career success (i.e., the objective and subjective). This research aims to extend organizational scholarship by demonstrating the mediating potential of embeddedness (i.e., linkages and sacrifice for leaving a community) on the relationship between goal setting and career satisfaction. The study tests hypotheses derived from data collected from 303 full-time working respondents in the southeastern United States. Analyses indicated that embeddedness links and community either fully or partially mediated the majority of the relationships between goal setting and career success. This research includes a discussion of the study's results, strengths, limitations and directions for future research.

Keywords: Goal Setting, Embeddedness, Career Success

1. INTRODUCTION

Simply put, people know the importance of their careers and they do not consider them to be a simple of sum of their jobs. In fact, careers are a succession of work related involvements that firms and individuals both manage and promote over time (Cascio, 2016; Royle, 2015). As such, careers are not things individuals usually leaves to chance (Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalk, 2010).

Objective success is derived from pursuing rank and promotion being loyal to the firm and by showing a willingness to accept assignments. Historically, employees patiently wait for promotions provided they feel assured that those will eventually come (Cascio, 2016; Royle, 2015).

Nevertheless, as organizational boundaries blur, employees accept the responsibility of self-training and they accept transfers without assurances of either promotion or retention, things are changing (Greenhuas, Callanan, & DiRezno, 2008). Simultaneous to those changes, came a change in how employees define success. It is no longer just about how much they make, how positioned they are, or their tenure in their positions it is also how they feel about what they do with their lives.

For most of the latter 20th century, career success was measured rather precisely by performance evaluations (Cascio, 2016; Schermerhorn, Osborn, Uhl-Bien, & Hunt, p. 63, 2012). That narrow conceptualization, however, ignores employees' social connections which accrue over time and also enhance their careers (Royle, 2016, 2019).

Previous research clearly indicated that career success also reflects individuals' work-related emotional reactions to the settings in which they perform their duties (Ilies, Schwind-Wilson, & Wagner, 2009). Because most employees are likely to change jobs, occupations and even careers multiple times (e.g., Greenhaus et al., 2008), contemporary research should better understand the underlying linkages.

Specifically, this work describes how employee career goals (i.e., self-set goals and the firm devised goals to which workers commit) influence levels of embeddedness in organizations and communities and, ultimately, how that influences career success (i.e., both objective and subjective). The hypothesized relationships tested in the research are summarized in Figure 1 below.