Reviewer's report

Title: Organization Specific Predictors of Job Satisfaction: Findings From a Canadian Multi-Site Quality of Work Life Cross-Sectional Survey

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Reviewer: Dr C. Gail Hepburn

Level of interest: A paper whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Advice on publication: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until I see revised version

Krueger, Brazil, Lohfeld, Edward, Lewis, & Tjam. Organization specific predictors of job satisfaction: Findings from a Canadian multi-site quality of work life cross-sectional survey

Comments:

Although I do recognize the importance of research in Quality of Work Life (QWL), I have some questions/concerns about your paper. My major concern relates to the number of variables in the analyses-the number is too large for your individual site analyses and call your conclusions into question. I have organized my questions according to the sections in your paper.

BACKGROUND.

1) Please clarify the terms you use, especially QWL and job satisfaction. Are you using the two terms synonymously in this paper? Is job satisfaction simply a way of evaluating/operationalizing QWL? Some confusion may stem from your citation of the finding that a study found a strong correlation between job satisfaction and QWL (p. 4).

METHODS

Questionnaire Development
2) Please comment on the psychometric properties of the scales. Were these properties considered in the development stage? Currently, you only comment on factors related to implementation (e.g., time to complete, instructions).

3) The descriptions of the scales in your final questionnaires were not clear. I had to examine Table 3 and the 'Analysis' section (p. 9) before I completely understood how your descriptions related to the
variables in your analysis, i.e., which items were combined to form scales, and which items were left as single-items. Please justify these decisions in some way (e.g., why not create a scale for staff training and development?). Also, provide reliability estimates for the scales you do use.

4) From your description of 'Overall Impressions of Your Organization' I thought the 4 closed ended questions would be your outcome variable-job satisfaction. However, you use a single-item global job satisfaction measure (p. 10). Was this item one of these 4 items? If not, how was the 'overall impressions' category reduced to a single item in Table 3? Regardless, your outcome measure should be clearly delineated in your description of the questionnaire.

5) Please provide details about how the implementations did differ across organizations. State explicitly that the questionnaire was anonymous and confidential. Indicate if the survey underwent an ethical review.

Analysis
6) It would be helpful to tie the section about variable scoring (p. 9-10) more closely to specific measures. Perhaps you could include it in your description of the instrument-and alert the reader to the list of variables in Table 3? Why dichotomize variables, especially your outcome of job satisfaction?

7) Related to 3) above, why maintain 32 single-item questions? Could you not reduce the number of variables in the analysis by conducting factor analysis? The number of variables is problematic given your sample sizes in Sites 1-4.

8) Provide a rationale for 'screening' variables at the univariate level. Is it to reduce the numbers of variables in the logistic regression analyses? What are the pitfalls for doing this 'screening' and then using the reduced number of variables in a separate analysis of the same individuals--what are the implications for replication of your findings? I recommend removing variables from the analysis for theoretical reasons, or combining items to create more scale scores and thereby reducing the number of variables in your analysis. Alternatively, is there any way to justify combining samples?

Potential Predictors of Job Satisfaction
9) Sites 1-4 simply lack the sample size necessary to run the logistic analyses (even using the conservative rule of thumb of 10 data points per variable).

CONCLUSIONS

10) On p. 18 you allude to the fact that the findings were what you expected based on 'having inside knowledge' about specific organizations. Please elaborate.

11) Again, be clear about the relationship between job satisfaction and QWL.

12) Indicate the limitations your sample sizes impose-comment on the strength and replicability of your findings.

Competing interests:

None declared.