

Title	Measures of Job Satisfaction
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Brief Introduction	<p>1. Consideration of the worker's lot has until recently been concentrated on his/her remuneration. A recent literature, driven in part by the observed disparity between North American and European hours of work, has introduced an additional emphasis on the length of the working week; a related strand has looked at involuntary part-time work. The current report uses comparable survey data across nine different OECD countries to extend the above to a number of other job characteristics which workers say they value.</p> <p>2. This report examines the distribution of "good jobs" and "bad jobs", not as defined by an outside observer but as experienced and reported by workers themselves. A (partial) taxonomy of six components of a good job, as viewed by workers, is presented: pay; hours of work (both overwork and underwork); future prospects (promotion and job security); how hard or difficult the job is; job content (interest, prestige and independence); and interpersonal relationships. These are all argued to be important correlates of a good job, from the worker's point of view, or of job satisfaction.</p> <p>3. Job satisfaction is important in its own right as a part of social welfare, and this (simple) taxonomy allows a start to be made on such questions as "In what respects are older workers' jobs better than those of younger workers?" (and vice-versa), "Who has the good jobs?" and "Are good jobs being replaced by bad jobs?". In addition, measures of job quality seem to be useful predictors of future labour market behaviour. Workers' decisions about whether to work or not, what kind of job to accept or stay in, and how hard to work are all likely to depend in part upon the worker's subjective evaluation of their work, in other words on their job satisfaction.</p> <p>4. A small body of research in economics and psychology has considered these questions by relating satisfaction scores to subsequent observable labour market behaviour. Perhaps the most obvious expected correlation is with quits: workers who are dissatisfied should be more likely to quit (if satisfaction can be compared between individuals). Freeman (1978) uses American panel data to show that job satisfaction is a significant predictor of quits, with an effect which is, in two of the three datasets examined, at least as powerful as that of wages. Similar results using American data are found in Akerlof, Rose and Yellen (1988) and McEvoy and Cascio (1985), and by Clark, Georgellis and Sanfey (1998) using ten waves of German panel data. Other research has found that job satisfaction is negatively correlated with absenteeism (Clegg, 1983) and non-productive and counter-productive work (Mangione and Quinn, 1975). Last, Clark (1997) concludes that potential job satisfaction may help to explain the decision to work itself: dissatisfying and/or unpleasant jobs discourage labour force participation. An implication is that we only observe a sub-sample of potential workers - there are some who don't find the jobs on offer attractive enough to participate. One</p>

can argue that this phenomenon will be more important for women than for men, and for older rather than for middle-aged individuals. It may also be relevant for younger age-groups where some can choose to stay on in school.

5. This report suggests that there are more aspects of a good or satisfying job than just pay and hours. Concentration on only one or two of these aspects is likely to give a misleading picture both of where the good jobs are<sup>2</sup> and of workers' behaviour.