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# Job Satisfaction Scale of Warr, Cook and Wall (1979): The psychometric properties of the Portuguese version

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• ABSTRACT. La Job Satisfaction Scale di Warr, Cook e Wall (1979) è ampiamente utilizzata negli studi di psicologia dell'organizzazione ma la struttura fattoriale non è stata sufficientemente esplorata. Il presente studio, composto da 632 partecipanti, si propone di analizzare l'adattamento di questa scala alla lingua portoghese. L'analisi fattoriale confermativa supporta un modello gerarchico a tre fattori di soddisfazione lavorativa, in termini di coefficienti di adeguatezza del modello. Disporre di uno strumento validato in lingua portoghese ne consente un uso molto diffuso.

• SUMMARY. The Job Satisfaction Scale of Warr, Cook and Wall (1979) is widely used in studies within the scope of organizational psychology. However, the factor structure was not sufficiently explored (solutions: one factor, two factors, three factors). The present study aims to analyse the adaptation of this scale to the Portuguese language. The sample of the present study consists of 632 participants. Confirmatory factor analysis supports a hierarchical model of three factors of job satisfaction, in terms of adequacy coefficients of the model. The results support the use three factor model. Job satisfaction is widely important concept commonly used by investigators in different scientific areas. It's important to have a very used questionnaire available in Portuguese language, that could be practically used by Portuguese native speakers. A way to empirically have a real notion of job satisfaction levels of the employees is measuring it; having a validated instrument allow its use in Portuguese language.

Keywords: Professional satisfaction, Validation, Factorial structure, Psychometric

#### INTRODUCTION

Professional satisfaction is one of the most studied concepts in the field of organizational behavior since it is one of the most important human results of the work. Some studies pointed out a strong connection between being satisfied at work and performance (Bota, 2013; Gu & Siu, 2009; Wening & Choerudin, 2015). In other ways, there are studies in which no significant relationship was apparent (Mohr & Puck, 2007). Theoretical and practical studies have not guaranteed an unambiguous answer to the nature and strength of the connection between job satisfaction and organizational performance (Bakotic, 2016). Although, organizations with more satisfied employees tended to be more effective than organizations with dissatisfied employees (Ostroff, 1992). So, the real importance of professional satisfaction is reiterated empirically, as well as the relevance of its relation (antecedent or result) to other concepts, namely absenteeism (Schaumberg, & Flynn, 2017), turnover (Lusine, Jianfang, Jingjing & Thomas, 2017; Romeo, Yepes-Baldó & Lins, 2020; Sainju, Hartwell & Edwards, 2021), organizational citizenship behaviors (Lavi & Littman-Ovadia, 2017; Saxena, Tomar & Tomar, 2019), physical and mental health of the worker (burnout, self-esteem, anxiety, depression) (Faragher, Cass & Cooper, 2005; Kim, Ra, Park & Kwon, 2017), organizational commitment (Eliyana, Ma'arif & Muzakki, 2019; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993), organizational culture (Bellou, 2010; Mesfin, Woldie, Adamu & Bekele, 2020), or workaholism (McMillan, Brady, O'Driscoll & Marsh, 2002).

The study of job satisfaction has presented several definitions over time, considering the theoretical framework in which it falls. According to Judge and Klinger (2000), the most popular definition of job satisfaction, and the one that offers a greater comprehensiveness and theoretical coherence, was promoted by Locke (1976), who defined it as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences and professional dissatisfaction is the unpleasant emotional state resulting from the evaluation of the work itself as frustrating or blocking the realization of the values of the individual, related to the work. In this way, job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are a function of the perceived relationship between what the individual wants from his work and his perception of what he is receiving.

Locke (1976) points out three phases of the evolution of the concept of satisfaction: the psycho-economic one,

in which the professional satisfaction is translated by the salary obtained in function of the work performed; the psycho-sociological, where the professional satisfaction is analyzed taking into account both the personality of the individual and his relation to work as the external variables; the developmentalist, values the work situation taking into account the effort expended by the individual at work to obtain the desired rewards. Thus, job satisfaction is a variable of an affective nature and is a mental process for the evaluation of work experiences, which results in a pleasant or unpleasant state. It can be influenced by the individual's various mental contents, such as beliefs, values, morality, and the possibility of development at work (Levin & Stocks, 1989; Staw & Ross, 1985; Staw, Bell & Clausen, 1986).

Herzberg and colleagues proposed the Two Factor Theory (Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959) which is considered one of the first theories proposed to explain job satisfaction. It proposed the existence of two groups of factors, responsible, separately, for job satisfaction - the motivators - such as work itself, performance, promotion and recognition for the work performed: and by job dissatisfaction - hygienic factors such as supervision, interpersonal relationships at work, and organizational policies. One of the major contributions of Herzberg and colleagues (1959) was to identify the importance of psychological growth as a necessary condition for job satisfaction and to demonstrate that this growth comes from work itself. For Hackman and Oldham (1974), satisfaction would be determined by critical psychological states, caused by five central characteristics of the work: variety, identity, meaning, task autonomy and feedback received. This ratio would, according to them, be moderated by the need for employee growth. However, for Staw and Ross (1985) the concepts of social information processing, job characteristics can be subjective and perceptually flexible, and attitudes at work can be determined by both situational factors and relatively stable dispositional aspects of the individual through the time.

Job satisfaction is one of the most used constructs in industrial and organizational psychology (Heritage, Pollock & Roberts, 2015), for their relationships with individual and organizational dimensions in the workplace, as well as with working conditions (Dormann & Zapf, 2001). It can be considered as the passive acceptance of a satisfactory situation (Warr & Inceoglu, 2012), and can be based on intrinsic (e.g., affective bond) or extrinsic (e.g., payment) aspects (Warr, Cook & Wall, 1979). A meta-analysis developed by Faragher

et al. (2005) concluded that depression, anxiety, burnout, and self-esteem were all associated with job satisfaction. Thus, the conceptual and operational integrity of this concept has relevance both to the academic context and to applied valence.

#### Job Satisfaction Scale

Warr et al. (1979) developed a scale of 15 items indicative of intrinsic/extrinsic factors related to job satisfaction. The scale also includes a 16<sup>th</sup> item, which evaluates the overall satisfaction of the participant. In 2015, Heritage and colleagues reported that, up to that time, the study by Warr et al. had more than 650 citations, according to the records of the web of knowledge, and that this scale continued to be frequently used in the academic context, but also applied. The original two- and three-factor structures provided by Warr et al. (1979) were based on cluster analysis: an exploratory technique. These results are still quoted in contemporary literature (e.g., Falkum & Vaglum, 2005; Mohd Dahlan, Mearns & Flin, 2010; Ose et al., 2010; Solberg et al., 2012; Turner, Ross & Ibbetson, 2011). More often, reference is made to the two-factor solution (intrinsic/extrinsic). Magnavita, Fileni and Bergamaschi (2009) demonstrated a two-factor solution in an Italian translation scale study, although the solution did not accurately reflect the same items as those presented by Warr et al. (1979).

In addition to the studies of two and three factors of previous research, there are still studies that choose an one-dimensional solution. As an illustration, with the exploratory factorial analysis, Morrison (2004) found a solution of a single factor that best represented the structure of the underlying factor of the scale. Hills, Joyce and Humphreys (2012) observed a single factor solution through exploratory techniques.

It should be noted that all the investigations studied used exploratory and non-factorial confirmatory analyzes. There is limited consensus in the research literature on the factor structure of this scale. By 2015, Heritage and colleagues pointed out that to date the use of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) has not been used to validate the factorial structure of the measure. These authors present a hierarchical model of three factors, in which there is a latent factor that represents the general professional satisfaction and that has high correlations with the three factors.

In view of the importance of the construct and due to the happy-productive worker hypothesis has most often been examined in organizational research by correlating job satisfaction to performance (Wright & Cropanzano, 2000) is our main goal of this study to contribute to the adaptation of a widely used measure to the Portuguese language. Despite the widely used of this measure, only with few studies of analysis to its psychometric characteristics, namely using structural equation models, the present study seeks to respond to this need. Thus, it is our objective to contribute to the adaptation of the scale of Warr and colleagues (1979) to the Portuguese population, as well as to explore its factorial structure.

#### **METHOD**

## Sample

A total of 632 individuals participated in this study, 252 men and 379 women, aged between 18 and 68 years. Most of the participants are married (n = 369, 58.4%), or single (n = 258, 40.8%). The educational qualifications range from the 1<sup>st</sup> cycle of basic education (n = 7, 1.1%), the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> cycles of basic education (n = 60, 9.5%); (n = 201, 31.8%) and higher (n = 361, 57.15%). The employment situation is mainly employed (n = 550, 87.0%).

#### Questionnaire

Professional satisfaction was evaluated using the *Job Satisfaction Scale* of Warr et al. (1979). This is constituted by fifteen items, all of them in the positive sense, where they refer to various aspects of the work, where the participants indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied, they are in relation to each of the presented work characteristics. There is still a sixteenth item that refers to overall job satisfaction. The response scale is 7 points (1 = extremely unsatisfied to 7 = extremely satisfied). The internal consistency of the scale in the original study is .89.

The scale translation process, to maintain the equivalence between the original measure in English and the version translated into Portuguese, followed the method proposed by Brislin (1970): 1) back-translation method; 2) bilingual technique; 3) committee approach; and 4) pre-test procedure. For the pre-test, the translated version into Portuguese was applied to 15 participants, and the value of internal

consistency was acceptable. These participants were not included in the final sample.

A questionnaire was also applied with sociodemographic questions regarding the age, gender, marital status, literacy, employment status and type of employment contract.

## Data collection procedure

Participants completed the questionnaire, which took about 10 minutes to complete. The paper and pencil questionnaires were completed in the presence of the investigator, in companies, universities, and public places. Participants were guaranteed the anonymity of data, as well as voluntary and free participation.

## Data analysis procedure

To analyze the data, the SPSS (version 20.0) and SPSS Amos (version 20.0) programs were used. To carry out the adaptation and validation of the scale for the Portuguese population, descriptive statistics of the items, confirmatory factor analysis and internal consistency analysis were performed.

The following indicators were calculated based on the recommendations of Byrne (2010): The  $\chi^2$  (chi-square);  $\chi^2/df$  (which must range between 2 and 5); CFI (which can vary between 0 and 1); RMSEA (values between .05 and .08 indicate a good fit); and SRMR (an appropriate adjustment of the model is indicated by values lower than .05; Hu & Bentler, 1999). To analyze the internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) and coefficient omega ( $\alpha$ ) were performed.

The maximum likelihood estimation method was used, which assumes the multivariate normal distribution and is robust when this assumption is not attended (Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger & Müller, 2003), which is the case for the data in this study (Kolmogorov-Smirnov ≤.01).

#### **RESULTS**

## Analysis of items

As can be seen in Table 1, the data have an asymmetric distribution and do not meet the assumption of normality according to the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test.

## Confirmatory factor analysis

In the accomplishment of the confirmatory factorial analysis the several solutions found in previous studies were tested: (i) one-factor (16 items); (ii) one-factor (15 items); (iii) bifactorial (extrinsic satisfaction and intrinsic satisfaction) (15 items); (iv) trifactorial (extrinsic satisfaction, intrinsic satisfaction, and satisfaction with professional relations - subordinated to a general factor: general professional satisfaction) (see Table 2).

The model of the three factors, ensured a better adjustment (see Figure 1).

The observed  $\chi^2/df$  of 6.127 (p=.000) approached the desired values. The CFI of .914 is a benchmark for good adjustment (Byrne, 2010; Joreskog, 1966). Regarding the SRMR and RMSEA should have values lower than .05 to be considered a good fit, although values close to .08 are considered a reasonable adjustment (MacCallum, Browne & Sugawara, 1996). Thus, the SRMR value of .047 and the RMSEA of .089 are indicative of a reasonable adjustment.

## Analysis of internal consistency

The scale reliability analysis was performed using the Cronbach's alpha and omega coefficient. The value of reliability with all items was very good ( $\alpha$  = .933;  $\omega$  = .934). The elimination of item 15 maintain the value.

The following internal consistency values were observed: intrinsic satisfaction -  $\alpha$  = .866,  $\omega$  = .868; extrinsic satisfaction -  $\alpha$  = .707,  $\omega$  = .710; satisfaction with professional relationships -  $\alpha$  = .877,  $\omega$  = .878. In any of the dimensions no item should be eliminated, otherwise the internal consistency will be reduced.

# DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The present study had as main objective to analyze the factorial structure of the scale of Warr et al. (1979), in a sample of Portuguese population. Based on the theoretical description of Warr et al. (1979), it would be expected to observe a factorial structure that expresses two factors (intrinsic satisfaction and extrinsic satisfaction) or a unifatorial solution. A three-factor hierarchical model presented the best model adjustment indices.

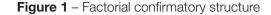
Table 1 - Location, normality, and asymmetry of the data

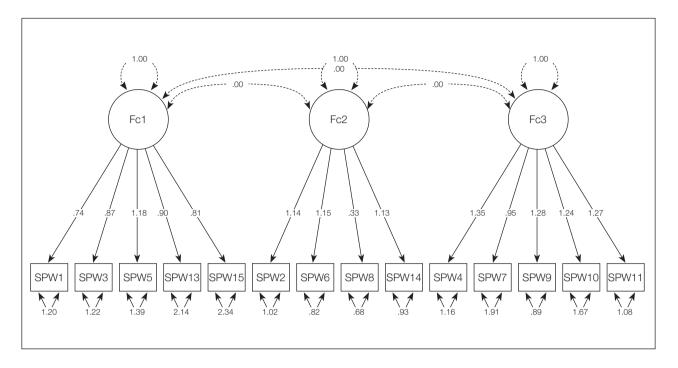
	Percentiles							Central Tendency		Normality	Asymmetry
	5	10	25	50	75	90	95	Mean	SD	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	
Item 1	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	6.00	7.00	4.74	1.323	KS = .191, p = .000	453
Item 2	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	7.00	4.88	1.523	KS = .175, p = .000	531
Item 3	3.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	7.00	5.22	1.408	KS = .189, p = .000	595
Item 4	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	6.00	6.00	7.00	4.24	1.728	KS = .141, p = .000	236
Item 5	1.65	2.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	7.00	4.81	1.668	KS = .157, p = .000	538
Item 6	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	7.00	4.96	1.465	KS = .158, p = .000	547
Item 7	1.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	6.00	3.29	1.679	KS = .135, p = .000	.260
Item 8	2.00	2.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	6.00	7.00	4.50	1.564	KS = .155, p = .000	361
Item 9	1.00	2.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	7.00	4.56	1.589	KS = .171, p = .000	427
Item 10	1.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	6.00	7.00	3.20	1.790	KS = .145, p = .000	.388
Item 11	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	4.04	1.645	KS = .149, p = .000	159
Item 12	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	4.29	1.557	KS = .154, p = .000	282
Item 13	1.00	2.00	3.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	7.00	4.52	1.720	KS = .162, p = .000	408
Item 14	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	7.00	4.69	1.489	KS = .159, p = .000	421
Item 15	1.00	2.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	7.00	7.00	4.58	1.733	KS = .150, p = .000	502
Item 16	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	6.00	7.00	4.68	1.421	KS = .174, p = .000	489

Table 2 - Confirmatory factorial structures tested

	$\chi^2/df$	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
1. One-factor (16 items)	7.323	.889	.872	.100	.052
2. One-factor (15 items)	7.655	.884	.865	.103	.054
3. Bifactorial(15 items)	7.692	.885	.864	.103	.054
4. Trifactorial (15 items)	6.127	.914	.896	.089	.047

*Legenda. df* = degree of freedom; CFI = Comparative Fit Index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index; RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; SRMR = Standardized Root Mean Squared Residual.





The original article by Warr et al. (1979) have correlations between the subscale scores (r=.58 - .72), but not between latent factors. When strongly correlated latent factors of the scale are considered, then one-dimensionality can be guaranteed for practical issues. This further validates some exploratory results from previous studies (e.g., Hills et al., 2012; Morrison, 2004) reiterating a one-dimensional solution was the best representative of the scale. Our results are consistent to those observed by Heritage et al. (2015), in a study developed with an Australian active population sample. Thus, by the similarity of results, we believe that the factorial solution of three factors, subordinated to a general factor of job satisfaction, allows its use, global or by dimensions, in the Portuguese population.

In terms of internal consistency, it should be noted that the observed results are very satisfactory, above those of the original study and some adaptations (e.g., Heritage et al., 2015). In the future we consider that the sample can be expanded achieving people who have managerial jobs and people who don't. Miao, Humphrey and Qian (2017) find that job satisfaction is higher in non-managerial jobs than in managerial jobs.

This study presents some limitations. For future research could be interesting to analyze the temporal stability. As previously discussed by Molina and colleagues (Molina, Moliner, Martínez-Tur, Cropanzano & Peiró, 2016) for the assessment of justice climate, we believed that in case of job satisfaction, a longitudinal assessment could have allowed to test possible variability over the time. So, although this study contributes to a better understanding of the *Job Satisfaction Scale*, namely through the performance of factorial validity and assessment of different structures, one of the limitations was to apply only one instrument, which did not allow us to observe, for example, the temporal stability of the measure.

This study has also some methodological limitations, for example sample doesn't guarantee a normal distribution and the invariance wasn't tested.

To have more evidence of psychometric properties of this questionnaire it would be interesting to develop studies considering other validities (e.g., convergent; divergent; content), as also suggested by van Beveren et al. (2017) in a study of psychometric properties of *Global Transformational Leadership Scale*.

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