

**ISMC 2019**  
**15<sup>th</sup> International Strategic Management Conference**

**THE ROLE OF SELF-EFFICACY AND WORK DISCIPLINE ON  
CAREER SATISFACTION**

Elif Bilginođlu (a), Uđur Yozgat (b)\*  
\*Corresponding author

(a) Istanbul, Turkey, [elifb@ada.net.tr](mailto:elifb@ada.net.tr)

(b) Arkin University of Creative Arts and Design, North Cyprus, [ugur.yozgat@arucad.edu.tr](mailto:ugur.yozgat@arucad.edu.tr)

*Abstract*

The career that an individual chooses will affect all aspects of his/her life. Considering the amount of time spent at work and the important role that careers play in determining the overall quality of life, we may understand why careers are important as a focus of both research and practice. Careers are important sources of satisfaction or dissatisfaction that the employees need to manage. Previously most attention has been paid to organizational antecedents of career satisfaction and there has been limited empirical work which explored the individual antecedents of career satisfaction. The present study aims to examine the moderating role of self-efficacy between the employees' self-discipline at work (work discipline) and career satisfaction. Data gained from 273 employees were analyzed. The findings reveal that work discipline and self-efficacy have a statistically significant positive effect on the employees' career satisfaction. Additionally, the relationship between work discipline and employees' career satisfaction is moderated by self-efficacy.

© 2019 Published by Future Academy [www.FutureAcademy.org.uk](http://www.FutureAcademy.org.uk)

**Keywords:** Self-efficacy, work discipline, career satisfaction.



## 1. Introduction

Careers are important as a focus of both research and practice. When we consider the great amount of time spent at work and the important role that careers play in determining the overall quality of life (Hall, 2002), we may understand why. Until now, most attention has been paid to organizational antecedents of career satisfaction (e.g. Armstrong-Stassen & Ursel, 2011; Barnett & Bradley, 2007; Joo & Park, 2010; Liu, Kwan, & Mao, 2012; Oh, 2013). And yet, there has been little empirical work which explored the individual antecedents of career satisfaction. Taking into account that it is the individual who discovers her/his own career path at the very beginning (Jordan & Whaley, 2008, p. 7) and thus recent career management research stresses the individual responsibility for career development (Clarke, 2008; Enache, Sallán, Simo, & Fernandez, 2013), the present study aims to fill this gap by examining the role of two individual antecedents, namely self-efficacy and work discipline on career satisfaction. In this way, it will contribute to the strategic human resource management field.

## 2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

### 2.1. Work Discipline

Self-discipline can be defined as the ability to accomplish what is necessary in order to reach your goal (Wakefield, 2008, p. 33) or the ability to motivate oneself despite a negative emotional state (Mokhetho Moupanaga, & Lerotholi, 2013, p. 28). Qualities associated with self-discipline include strong will, determination, hard work, patience, logic, self-control, persistence and consistence (Ferrara, 2009, p. 96; Mokhetho et al., 2013, p. 28). Although self-discipline may have profound effects in every single area in one's life, one of the most significant areas that this effect will be felt is at work (Cohen, 2014; Evans, 2018). "Self-discipline at work is a positive effort which helps in developing set ways for our thoughts, actions and habits. It is an art of self-control and self-reliance, which empowers a person to stick to his/her decisions and propels the individual towards achieving the set goals" (Singh, 2019).

### 2.2. Career Satisfaction

Career satisfaction which is defined by Fu (2010) as "the level of overall happiness experienced through one's choice of career" (p. 278), refers to how satisfied employees are with their career progress, career advancement and future career prospects (Catalyst & The Diversity Institute in Management and Technology, 2007, p. 9; Rolundo, 2006, p. 4). This means it is an internally defined career success outcome (Trivellas, Kakkos, Blanas, & Santouridis, 2015, p. 468). Career satisfaction has been regarded as an important variable for studies on career development and other areas of inquiry dealing with occupations, work dynamics, and individual adjustment (Lounsbury, 2006, p. 142). Self-discipline which becomes a prerequisite in the formation of attitudes and behaviors will make an employee's work life easier in supporting efforts to achieve goals and thus creating a productive working atmosphere (Luddin, & Supriyati, 2018, p. 89). Self-discipline can be a valuable quality for the individual who is subject to it (Torrington, Hall, Taylor, & Atkinson, 2014, p. 395). Alessandra, Cathcart, and Monoky (1990) quoted that "pride in and ownership of one's choices are important ingredients in career satisfaction" (p. 12). Therefore, an employee's self-discipline will be fundamental to his/her career and will be a long-standing source of satisfaction (Miller & Bissell, 2006). Based on these the researchers would like to propose the following hypothesis

*H<sub>1</sub>: Work discipline has a positive effect on career satisfaction.*

### 2.3. Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy beliefs are the beliefs in an individual's ability to succeed in specific situations (Lee & Johnston-Wilder, 2017, p. 284) and "the beliefs about what means lead to what goals and about possessing the personal capacity to use these means" (Flammer, 2001). Schunk (2001) mentioned that "self-efficacy can influence choice of activities, effort, persistence, and achievement" (p. 13820). Employees who have a higher self-efficacy will regard difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered. They set challenging goals and in order to reach them, they maximize their efforts. And when they cannot reach those goals, they do not quit and do their best to recover their sense of self-efficacy after setbacks (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2016, p. 37). Work discipline is an-achievement related behavioral characteristic (Flora, 2004, p. 118). It involves having a clear and concise idea of what an employee will need to accomplish as well as setting out to accomplish it (Scott, 2019). It allows employees to give their full attention to the task at hand (Anderson, 2019). Thus, having self-discipline may be the royal road to building achievement (Brooks & Goldstein, 2009, p. 270) and reaching career goals (Ricketts & Ricketts, 2011, p. 525). On the other hand, employees with a higher self-efficacy can intensify their efforts, meet challenging standards and attain their goals (Bandura & Cervone, 1986). The employees who have a stronger work discipline and a higher self-efficacy would have a higher commitment to reach their career goals and they will progress in their careers. Consequently, they will be more satisfied with their careers as opposed to those who have neither a strong work discipline nor a high self-efficacy. Based on these it would be hypothesized that

*H<sub>2</sub>: Self-efficacy moderates the relationship between work discipline and career satisfaction.*

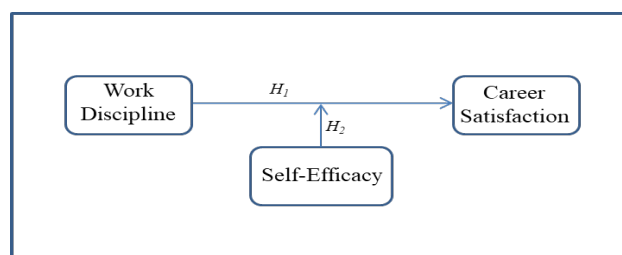
## 3. Research Method

### 3.1. Sampling

Following Brislin's (1980) procedure the items of the questionnaire was two way translated by four bilingual experts. The questionnaires were distributed in Istanbul using convenience sampling to total 400 employees from different sectors between September – October 2018 of which 305 (76.25 %) were returned. After removing the uncompleted ones, 283 (70.57 %) questionnaires were analyzed and tested.

### 3.2. Research Model

The conceptual model is illustrated in Figure 1.



**Figure 01.** Model of the Research

### 3.3. Measures

Self-efficacy is measured using 6-items short form scale developed by Romppel et al. (2013) and adapted from Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995). The scale is translated into Turkish by Aypay (2010). Work discipline is measured using the 8 self-discipline items of NEO PI-R (Costa & McCrae, 1995) and translated in Turkish by Gülgöz (2002) as it is adapted to the work context by Hirschfield and Feild (2000). Career satisfaction is measured by the 5-item questionnaire developed by Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley (1990) and translated in Turkish by Ulukök and Akın (2016).

## 4. Findings

The demographics of participants were as follows: 144 (50.88 %) of the 283 participants were male, mean of their age 36.54 (SD 11.07), and their tenure 12.04 (sd. 10.32) years, 162 (57.24 %) of them possessed graduate degree. Following the generally accepted procedures exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using Varimax rotation were applied to the variables (dependent: career satisfaction, independent: work discipline and self-efficacy) (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003) where it is important in international studies Knight (1997). Reported Cronbach's'  $\alpha$  values were in reliable range (greater than 0.70) (Nunnally, 1978). Bivariate correlation values between the variables were reported in Table 1. Work discipline and self-efficacy have positive correlations with career satisfaction of the employees (.632\*\* / .454\*\*).

**Table 01.** Descriptive Values, Cronbach's' Alpha Coefficients, and Bivariate Correlations among Study Variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3
<i>Career Satisfaction</i>	3,52	1.24	(.860)		
<i>Work Discipline</i>	4.04	1.15	.632***	(.766)	
<i>Self-Efficacy</i>	4.29	1.17	.454***	.487***	(.901)

Note: \* p <0.05, \*\* p <0.01, \*\*\* p <0.001 (two-tailed tests); Values in brackets on the diagonal represent Cronbach's' alpha coefficients. (N=283).

Hierarchical regression analysis was used to test the proposed hypotheses (Shown in Table 2). First, work discipline and self-efficacy were regressed on the career satisfaction of the employee stepwise linearly. Work discipline has a statistically moderate significant positive effect (.632\*\*) on the career satisfaction of the employee thus supporting Hypothesis 1 (Model1). Being able to test the moderating effect (Hypothesis 2) the main effects work discipline and self-efficacy were multiplied (the interaction term) and included in Model 2 (Aiken & West, 1991). In Model 2 the results showed a significant change in R-squared ( $\Delta R = 0.006$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The interaction term is statistically significant ( $\beta = .915$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) which proves the moderating effect of self-efficacy (Hypothesis 2 is supported).

**Table 02.** Hierarchical Regression Results

Variables	Career Satisfaction of the Employee	
	Model 1 $\beta$	Model 2 $\beta$
<b>Main effect variables</b>		
Work Discipline	.539***	.104 .
Self-Efficacy	.192***	-.327***
<b>Interaction variables</b>		
WD*SE		.915***
R2	.423	.429
$\Delta R^2$		.006*

Notes: Dependent Variable: Career Satisfaction of the Employee; WD: Work Discipline; SE: Self-Efficacy, \* $p < 0,05$  \*\* $p < 0.01$  \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

## 5. Conclusion and Discussions

Understanding the predictors of employees' career satisfaction is important for organizations which are looking for ways to develop motivated and qualified workforces. The findings of the present study reveal that work discipline has a positive impact on career satisfaction of the employees. This finding is consistent with the claims of researchers that people with self-discipline do not let impulses or feelings dictate their choices and thus they are able to make positive decisions more easily. As they make level-headed decisions, they tend to feel more satisfied with their lives. Employees with a higher self-discipline will be able to refuse immediate pleasure in favor of gaining long term satisfaction and achieving success in the best possible way. Therefore, self-discipline is the key to career success and career satisfaction (DuBrin, 2016; Patel, 2017).

The findings of the present study also reveal that self-efficacy has a positive impact on career satisfaction of the employees. This finding is consistent with the findings of previous studies which reveal that self-efficacy can predict career satisfaction (Abele & Spurk, 2009; Ballout, 2009; Inkson, 2007, p. 90).

The present study also empirically examined the moderating role that self-efficacy played in the relationship between work discipline and career satisfaction. The findings indicated that self-efficacy moderated the positive effects of work discipline on career satisfaction. These findings suggest that employees who have stronger work discipline and a higher self-efficacy would enjoy a greater career satisfaction. Until now, most studies have focused on the organizational antecedents of career satisfaction. This study makes a valuable contribution to literature on strategic human resource management by being one of few studies to examine the individual antecedents of career satisfaction. The researchers hope that this study may help managers understand how today's human resources view career satisfaction from the perspective of work discipline/self-efficacy connection framework.

## References

- Abele, A. E., & Spurk, D. (2009). The Longitudinal Impact of Self-efficacy and Career Goals on Objective and Subjective Career Success, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 74(1), 53-62.
- Aiken, L. S., & West, S. G. (1991). *Multiple Regression: Testing and Interpreting Interactions*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

- Alessandra, T., Cathcart, J., & Monoky, J. (1990). *Be Your Own Sales Manager: Strategies and Tactics for Managing Your Accounts, Your Territory, And Yourself*. New York: Fireside.
- Anderson, B. (2019). Great Leaders Exercise Self-Discipline. Retrieved at <https://www.sigmaassessmentsystems.com/self-discipline/>
- Armstrong-Stassen, M., & Ursel, N. D. (2011). Perceived Organizational Support, Career Satisfaction, and The Retention of Older Workers, *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 82(1), 201-220.
- Aypay, A. (2010). The Adaptation Study of General Self-efficacy (GSE) Scale to Turkish, *İnönü University Journal of the Faculty of Education*, 11(2), 113-131.
- Ballout, H. I. (2009). Career Commitment and Career Success: Moderating Role of Self-efficacy, *Career Development International*, 14(7), 655-670.
- Bandura, A., & Cervone, D. (1986). Differential Engagement of Self-reactive Influences in Cognitive Motivation, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 38(1), 92-113.
- Barnett, B. R., & Bradley, L. (2007). The Impact of Organizational Support Career Development on Career Satisfaction, *Career Development International*, 12(7), 617-636.
- Brislin, R. W. (1980). Translation and Content Analysis of Oral and Written Material. In H.C. Triandis & J.W. Berry (Eds.) *Handbook of Cross-cultural psychology: Methodology* (389-444). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Brooks, R., & Goldstein, S. (2009). *Raising a Self-Disciplined Child: Help Your Child Become More Responsible, Confident, and Resilient*. USA: McGraw Hill.
- Catalyst, The Diversity Institute in Management and Technology (2007). *Career Advancement in Corporate Canada: A Focus on Visible Minorities ~ Survey Findings*. New York: Catalyst Publication.
- Clarke, M. (2008). Understanding and Managing Employability in Changing Career Contexts, *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 32(4), 258-284.
- Cohen, J. (2014, June 18). 5 Proven Methods for Gaining Self Discipline. Retrieved at <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jennifercohen/2014/06/18/5-proven-methods-for-gaining-self-discipline/#2a39fefb3c9f>
- Costa, P. T., & McCrae, R. R. (1995). Domains and Facets: Hierarchical Personality Assessment Using the Revised NEO Personality Inventory, *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 64(1), 21-50.
- DuBrin, A. J. (2016). *Self-Discipline the Key to Career and Personal Success*. USA: Esquire Publications.
- Enache, M., Sallán, J.M., Simo, P. & Fernandez, V. (2013). Organizational Commitment within a Contemporary Career Context, *International Journal of Manpower*, 34(8), 880-898.
- Evans, D. G. (2018). *Self-Discipline: How to Build Self-Discipline and Achieve Your Long Term Goals*. USA: D.G. Evans.
- Ferrara, R. J. (2009). *The Deck of Life: Playing the Cards You're Dealt*. New York, Bloomington: iUniverse, Inc.
- Flammer, A. (2001). Self-efficacy. In N. J. Smelser & P. B. Baltes (Eds.) *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (13812-13815). Oxford, UK: Pergamon.
- Flora, S. R. (2004). *The Power of Reinforcement: Lacan, Feminisms, and Queer Theory*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Fu, J. (2010). Is Information Technology Career Unique? Exploring Differences in Career Commitment & Its Determinants among IT & Non-IT Employees, *International Journal of Electronic Business Management*, 8(4), 263-271.
- Greenhaus, J. H., Parasuraman, S., & Wormley, W. M. (1990). Effect of Race on Organizational Experiences, Job Performance Evaluations, and Career Outcomes, *Academy of Management Journal*, 33(1), 64-86.
- Gülgöz, S. (2002). Five-factor model and NEO-PI-R in Turkey. A. J. Marsella, R. R. McCrae & J. Allik (Eds.) *The Five-Factor Model of Personality Across Cultures* (1-23). Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Hall, D. T. (2002). *Careers in and Out of Organizations*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

- Hirschfeld, R. R., & Feild, H. S. (2000). Work Centrality and Work Alienation: Distinct Aspects of a General Commitment to Work, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 21, 789-80.
- Inkson, K. (2007). *Understanding Careers: The Metaphors of Working Lives*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Joo, B., & Park, S. (2010). Career Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, and Turnover Intention: The Effects of Goal Orientation, Organizational Learning Culture and Developmental Feedback, *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 31(6), 482-500.
- Jordan, A. K., & Whaley, L. T. (2008). *Investigating Your Career*. Mason, Ohio: Thomson South-Western.
- Knight, G. A. (1997). Cross-cultural Reliability and Validity of a Scale to Measure Firm Entrepreneurial Orientation, *Journal of Business Venturing*, 12(3), 213-225
- Lee, C., & Johnston-Wilder, S. (2017). The Construct of Mathematical Resilience. in U. Xolocotzin Eligio (Ed.) *Understanding Emotions in Mathematical Thinking and Learning* (269-291). London, UK: Academic Press.
- Liu, J., Kwan, H. K., & Mao, Y. (2012). Mentorship Quality and Protégés' Work-to-family Positive Spillover, Career Satisfaction and Voice Behavior in China, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 23(19), 1-19.
- Luddin, M. R., & Supriyati, Y. (2018). Influence of Work Discipline, Career Development and Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance Directorate General Research and Development of Ministry Research, Technology and Higher Education. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management*, 6(02).
- Lounsbury, J. W. (2006). Career Satisfaction. In J.H. Greenhaus & G.A. Callanan (Eds.) *Encyclopedia of Career Development* (142-146). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Miller, R. H., & Bissell, D. (2006). *Med School Confidential: A Complete Guide to the Medical School Experience : By Students, For Students*. New York: Thomas Dunne Books.
- Mokhetho, K. C., Moupanaga, M., & Lerotholi, L. J. (2013). *The Success Theorem: A Three-Dimensional Theory and Road-Map to Success*. Houston: Strategic Book Publishing and Rights Co.
- Nunnally, J. C. (1978). *Psychometric Theory*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Oh, J. R. (2013). *The Impact of Organizational Justice on Career Satisfaction of Employees in the Public Sector of South Korea*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. University of Minnesota.
- Patel, D. (2017, February 22). 10 Powerful Ways to Master Self-Discipline. Retrieved at <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/287005>
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J. Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common Method Biases in Behavioral Research: A Critical Review of the Literature and Recommended Remedies, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(5), 879-903.
- Ricketts, C., & Ricketts, J. C. (2011). *Leadership: Personal Development and Career Success*. USA: Delmar.
- Rolundo, M. (2006). Abilities. In J.H. Greenhaus & G.A. Callanan (Eds.) *Encyclopedia of Career Development* (1-5). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Rommel, M., Herrmann-Lingen, C., Wachter, R., Edelmann, F., Düngen, H., Pieske, B., & Grande, G. (2013). A Short Form of the General Self-efficacy Scale (GSE-6): Development, Psychometric Properties and Validity in an Intercultural Non-clinical Sample and a Sample of Patients at Risk for Heart Failure, *GMS Psycho-Social-Medicine*, 10, 1-7.
- Schunk, D. H. (2001). Self-efficacy: Educational Aspects. In N. J. Smelser & P. B. Baltes (Eds.) *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (13820-13822). Oxford, UK: Pergamon.
- Schunk, D. H., & DiBenedetto, M. K. (2016). Self-Efficacy Theory in Education. In K.R. Wentzel & D.B. Miele (Eds.). *Handbook of Motivation at School* (34-54). New York: Routledge.
- Schwarzer, R., & Jerusalem, M. (1995). Generalized Self-efficacy Scale. J. Weinman, S. Wright, & M. Johnston (Eds.) *Measures in Health Psychology: A User's Portfolio. Causal and Control Beliefs* (35-37). Windsor, UK: NFER-Nelson.
- Scott, E. (2019). *Daily Self-Discipline: Daily Habits and Mindset to Build Sustainable Self-Discipline and Achieve Your Goals*. USA: Evan Scott.

- Singh, K. (2019). Are You Encouraging Self Discipline at Workplace? Retrieved at <http://sapience.net/blog/214-961-are-you-encouraging-self-discipline-at-workplace/>
- Torrington, D., Hall, L., Taylor, S., & Atkinson, C. (2014). *Human Resource Management*. UK: Pearson Education Limited.
- Trivellas, P., Kakkos, N., Blanas, N., & Santouridis, I. (2015). The Impact of Career Satisfaction on Job Performance in Accounting Firms: The Mediating Effect of General Competencies, *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 33, 468-476.
- Ulukök, E., & Akın, A. (2016). İşkoliklik ve kariyer tatmini. *IBAD Uluslararası Bilimsel Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 1(2), 62-71.
- Wakefield, T. S. (2008). *Mental Toughness: Understanding the Game of Life*. Bloomington: Author House.