



Upward Social Comparisons and Job Satisfaction: Diving into the Mediating Role of Envy
and the Moderating Role of Perceived Organizational Support.

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Abstract

This research aims to explore upward social comparisons' effects on job satisfaction, while taking into account the mediating effects of both benign and malicious envy, as well as the moderating effects of perceived organizational support (POS) on this framework. Hypotheses propose that upward social comparisons are negatively associated with job satisfaction, and that benign and malicious envy mediate this negative relationship by increasing and reducing job satisfaction, respectively. In turn, POS is hypothesized to moderate this mediation by reducing envy's effect on job satisfaction. While analyzing questionnaire results of $N = 140$ adult employees, SPSS as well as PROCESS macro revealed that the hypothesized relationships were not significantly supported. Thus, the findings give rise to suggestions for future research, underscoring the need to investigate the contributing underlying effects in these complex workplace dynamics.

Keywords: upward social comparisons, job satisfaction, benign envy, malicious envy, perceived organizational support, moderated mediation.

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“Envy is the great leveler: if it cannot level things up, it will level them down.”

Dorothy Sayers (1949, p. 771)

In today's swiftly altering workplace, it is of great importance to acknowledge and understand the countless possible factors affecting personnel welfare and organizational performance. Social comparisons have noteworthy consequences on numerous facets of employees' work experiences, such as one's task performance, accomplishments, incentives to keep working, overall output as well as job satisfaction (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999). The affective events theory (AET) postulates that personal situations may provoke emotional responses that regulate other attitudes and behaviors (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Applying this theory to a work-related context, this thesis posits that upward social comparisons and perceived organizational support are the personal situations that may occur in organizational settings and thereby provoke envious emotions, that in turn regulate other attitudes like job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is an aspect of great importance to most, if not all, people in the workplace. It is therefore carefully looked at by many HR departments as it is closely associated with work motivation and thereby structurally affecting organizational behavior (Ćulibrk et al., 2018).

Hence, this thesis aims to provide insight into the multifarious relationships between upward social comparisons, envy, perceived organizational support and ultimately job satisfaction with the use of a dual-pathway model (Nijstad et al., 2010), thereby contributing to the development of a broader comprehension as well as organizational approaches for promoting constructive and committing workplace milieus where job satisfaction is central. The study is especially relevant in unveiling factors and strategies that enable an increased

satisfaction within organizational settings. Thus, upward social comparisons are associated with job satisfaction, with its compound relation further elaborated on below.

(Upward) Social Comparisons and Job Satisfaction

Individuals have a recurrent natural tendency to gauge their personality characteristics, possessions, achievements as well as their skillfulness relative to others in their social environment, also known as social comparison (Festinger, 1954). One's father may have run more marathons, one's colleague may have more degrees, yet one's partner may experience excessive health problems or one's neighbor may have a smaller yard. Social comparisons fluctuate among individuals and may occur in a down- or upward manner, leading to a wide array of affective responses. Downward social comparisons occur when one compares oneself to another person who is worse off, generally resulting in enhanced consciousness of positive details due to diverted notice of what is already present (Nicuță & Constantin, 2021). On the other hand, upward social comparisons have been found to have a negative effect on overall life satisfaction as one compares to another individual who is perceived to be superior (Park et al., 2021). This negative relation between upward social comparisons and life satisfaction also touches upon the workplace domain, affecting for example job satisfaction (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999). Job satisfaction is an organizational variable that is often taken into account when studying workplace behavior, defined as the employees' vantage point of their feelings towards their job (Spector, 2022). This attitude can be placed on a continuum from unfavorable to optimistic and comprises contentment with guidance by the management, the job circumstances, possible profit or recognition as well as personal development (Spector, 2022).

In accordance with this, research states that upward social comparisons could possibly induce adverse self-evaluations (Collins, 1996), subsequently contributing to reduced job satisfaction (Shin & Sohn, 2015). However, Collins (1996) also shows that upward social

comparisons do not consistently result in disadvantageous effects, as it may also bolster self-enhancement and constructive adjustments in individuals' self-perspective. This suggests that there may be other contributing factors at play in the upward social comparison-job satisfaction relationship. In line with the more beneficial effects of upward social comparisons is the research by Lockwood and Kunda (1997), revealing that upward social comparisons may encourage and drive people when there are attainable role models for their success, possibly positively prompting job satisfaction. Therefore, the distance to the comparison target is also deemed an important factor in identifying which type of reaction will occur following the comparison. Specifically, if the target comparison perceivably has attainable and realistic features or success, this results in self-enhancement and motivation, whereas self-deflation occurs when it is perceived as unachievable due to the improbability to progress. Thus, trying to better oneself is only realistic when the proximity to the comparison target is small (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997).

These nuanced findings denote the complex outcomes of social comparisons and highlight the role of contextual factors as well as individual variations in understanding the relation to job satisfaction. The notion that envy may be an underlying mechanism in this relationship, mediating the effects of social comparisons on job satisfaction, is endorsed by research proposing that envious emotions may modify an employees' job satisfaction, and is visualized in Figure 1.

The Mediating Role of Envy

Drawing on Festinger's (1954) groundbreaking social comparison theory, one is able to examine how upward social comparisons may influence and elicit employees' attitudes, behavior as well as emotions (Greenberg et al., 2007). Envy is one of these emotions, characterized by a mix of feelings of subordination, antagonism and bitterness that is triggered by the consciousness of another who got a hold of an enticing device, feature or

social rank (Parrott, 1991; Parrott & Smith, 1993; Smith & Kim, 2007). Envy is the pain over the good fortune of others (Aristotle, 350BC/1954) and is a prevailing individual relationship occurrence that causes detrimental beliefs, feelings and behaviors (Xu et al., 2023). For example, it is described by Reiss (2021) as calamitous, resulting from the lack of social standing and resulting in employees feeling threatened. This, in turn, induces negative affect including disquiet, depression, outrage and vengefulness at work (Reiss, 2021). According to Salovey and Rodin (1984), envy is fundamentally based on an upward social comparison and especially probable when it concerns individuals or groups that are comparable to the person making said comparisons as well as when it touches upon domains that this individual deems eminently relevant.

Generally, two forms of envy may be identified: episodic and dispositional envy. Episodic envy is the vexatious emotion following a particular negative or upward social comparison, that is to say, arising from a particular situation (Cohen-Charash, 2009). Dispositional envy, on the other hand, represents a person's characteristic inclination to upward social comparisons and pursues certain behavior that equalizes the contrast in respect to these superior individuals (Lange et al., 2018). This evinces that one is commonly responsive to social status differences in the environment around us, including the work environment, as well as that individuals differ in the degree to which they acknowledge and reply with envious emotions to these circumstances.

Besides the difference in the frequency of envy being displayed (i.e. situational state- or personality trait-contingent), the nature of envy may be also further classified, namely into benign and malicious envy. According to numerous articles, benign envy is defined as when an individual yearns to have the envied individual's superior attribute, whereas it is considered malicious envy when an individual longs for the envied individual to lack said superior attribute (Battle & Diab, 2022; Lange & Crusius, 2015; Van de Ven, 2017). This

duality is also demonstrated in definitions of envy in for example the Dutch language, which uses both ‘benijden’ and ‘afgunst’ for benign and malicious envy, respectively (Lange & Crusius, 2015). Correspondingly, Sayers’ (1949) opening quote proposes that this term is bilateral. Interpreting envy this way, brings light to the fact that distinct sorts of envy are generated, which in turn bring about distinct outcomes, ranging from detrimental to beneficial (Battle & Diab, 2022). These outcomes induced by envy could have significant effects on an individual employee, but also on an organizational level (Xu et al., 2023).

In specific, benign envy may act as a mediating and motivating factor in trying to achieve the accomplishments of colleagues one is upwards comparing oneself with, contributing to reinforced development and eventually a boosted job satisfaction (Cohen-Charash, 2009). In line with this, the literature review by Şener et al. (2021) unveils that benign envy is linked to better performance, improved group cohesion and enhanced job satisfaction. Moreover, a study by Navarro-Carrillo et al. (2018) discovered that malicious envy has been found to proliferate the proportion of negative emotions concerning the envied coworker. Specifically, malicious envy is linked to low performance, malevolence, hatred and counterproductive work behavior towards the envied colleague (Şener et al., 2021). An increase in counterproductive work behavior and negative emotions in the workplace is related to a decreased job satisfaction, thereby highlighting the relevance of malicious envy in relation to decreased job satisfaction (Lan et al., 2021).

In the light of the dual-pathway model, the mediating role of both benign and malicious envy have been delineated in affecting job satisfaction resulting from upward social comparisons. Further developing on this framework, it is of great importance to scrutinize other possible influencing factors in the organizational context. Therefore, the next section explores how perceived organizational support may moderate the aforementioned relationships by potentially buffering the effects of envy on job satisfaction, thereby

contributing insight into the strategies that may diminish or highlight the effects of envy in organizational contexts.

The Moderating Role of Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived organizational support plays a crucial moderating role in the relationship between upward social comparisons and job satisfaction, as envy has been described to be triggered by factors such as unfair rewards and no perceived organizational support. Perceived organizational support, commonly abbreviated to POS, is defined as the guarantee that organizational help is accessible to the employee when necessary, and the extent to which employees believe the management values their contributions, health, happiness and morals (George et al., 1993). Relatedly, by scrutinizing the dynamics of upward social comparisons and perceived social support within an akin work context, Halbesleben and Buckley (2006) explore its negative relation, highlighting the importance of the social work context as well as interplay between coworkers.

POS itself directly and positively contributes to job satisfaction by satisfying socioemotional demands, enhancing the anticipation of recognition following outstanding performance as well as communicating the aid when employees may need it. Besides positive effects for the employee, positive organizational effects are also visible, for example regarding improved affective dedication and performance as well as weakened withdrawal behavior (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Accordingly, Herachwati et al. (2018) found that POS is related to employee contentment and vocational development. In practice, POS is also found to induce a felt obligation to sequentially help the company in attaining targets. Also, by satisfying the socioemotional demands, both organizational identification and affective emotional devotion are enhanced (Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011). Likely, this will in turn reduce envious behavior in the workplace.

Besides the fact that direct effects of POS on job satisfaction are found, it is expected that upward social comparisons lead to more envy but also that POS will weaken this relationship. In other words, POS moderates the relation between upward social comparisons and envy. Because, the support of employees may act as a buffer in this upward social comparison-envy relation by moderating the adverse emotional effects of the comparison as employees' worth, input and importance to the company are validated (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). In short, this means that upward comparisons are related to increased envy, unless there is high perceived organizational support which then serves as a buffer due to the diminished effects that the two types of envy have on an employees' job satisfaction.

Relatedly, a study by Khan and Noor (2020) found that high POS acts in a mitigating manner by reducing the negative association between envy resulting from upward social comparisons and employee performance, a construct affiliated with job satisfaction. This proposes that besides the direct positive relationship with job satisfaction, POS also decreases the negative influence of upward social comparisons due to the moderated envious emotions that are brought about by the comparisons.

Thus, the moderated mediation framework is expected to be associated with a diminished experience of both malicious and benign envy as employees feel they are appreciated and supported by the company, consequently moderating the effect that malicious and benign envious emotions have on employees' job satisfaction. This means a less negative and less positive effect of malicious and benign envy on job satisfaction, respectively. Now that the theoretical underpinnings as well as the mediating and moderating factors of the model have been described, these relationships ought to be researched within an empirical framework. Hence, this present study delves into the real-world data of these dynamics, explained in the next section.

The Present Study

Keeping in mind the data and theories from preceding reviewed articles, the next five hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Upward social comparison is negatively associated with job satisfaction. This presumption is based on the academic research by Gibbons and Buunk (1999) and Shin and Sohn (2015). Fundamentally, this hypothesis holds that comparing oneself with another individual or group better off is related to a diminished satisfaction with one's job.

By employing a dual-pathway model, this research discerns the two forms of envy by demonstrating a more nuanced understanding of the mediating role of envy, in which each subtype affects job satisfaction differently. In specific, it is hypothesized that upward social comparison is positively related to both benign and malicious envy (Salovey & Rodin, 1984), in turn positively (Navarro-Carrillo et al., 2018) and negatively (Cohen-Charash, 2009; Şener et al., 2021) affecting job satisfaction, respectively. This results in the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2a: The relationship between upward social comparison and job satisfaction is mediated by malicious envy, such that upward social comparison is associated with increased malicious envy, which is related to reduced job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2b: The relationship between upward social comparison and job satisfaction is mediated by benign envy, such that upward social comparison is associated with increased benign envy, which is related to increased job satisfaction.

Moreover, a moderated mediation is expected between perceived organizational support, upward social comparison, via malicious envy and benign envy, and ultimately job satisfaction. Based on the findings of various articles investigating the direct effects of POS (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Herachwati et al., 2018; Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011), this research extends these results to suggest a mitigating effect of POS by acting as a buffer. As a result, the following two hypotheses are established:

Hypothesis 3a: Perceived organizational support (POS) moderates the relationship between upward social comparison and malicious envy, such that higher POS is associated with a reduction in the negative relationship between malicious envy and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3b: Perceived organizational support (POS) moderates the relationship between upward social comparison and benign envy, such that higher POS is associated with a reduction in the positive relationship between benign envy and job satisfaction.

Thus, this research will investigate how upward social comparisons may be negatively associated with job satisfaction, as well as how both benign and malicious envy are both positively related to upward social comparison. Yet, these two types of envy are expected to differ in its mediating effect on job satisfaction. Namely, benign envy is expected to positively relate to job satisfaction, whereas malicious envy is predicted to negatively relate to job satisfaction. Furthermore, it is hypothesized that perceived organizational support may moderate the relation between upward social comparison and envy, subsequently amplifying envy's consequences on job satisfaction. This expected moderated mediation framework containing a dual-pathway model as well as its anticipated positive and negative effects between each of the variables is illustrated in Figure 1.

Method

Participants and Procedure

With the use of an online survey on a platform called Qualtrics, the connections between upward social comparison, job satisfaction, envy and perceived organizational support have been scrutinized to verify if the real-life data is in line with the theoretical framework provided above. The Qualtrics questionnaire link was distributed among individual employees via personal networks, primarily on social media channels such as LinkedIn and WhatsApp. In this way, the non-probability snowball sampling technique

recruited participants. The duration of the data collection covered slightly less than a month, extending from April the 10th till May the 6th of 2024.

The required sample size for this research to contain significant results, was calculated via the G*Power application for an F -test in a linear multiple regression model. The outcome of this analysis, configured with a Fixed model to discover possible R^2 deviation from zero, signified that at least 129 participants are needed in order to discern significant results in the dataset that tests the hypotheses. To account for drop-out participants, the aim was 20% more participants, resulting in approximately 155 people.

Eventually, a total sample size of $N = 199$ was attained. Yet, once the data was cleaned to merely contain complete responses, the final sample consisted of $N = 140$. Thus, the listwise deletion cleared out 59 respondents with missing data from the original dataset. The final sample contained 79 females (56.4%), 53 males (37.9%), 7 participants identified as something else than the provided dichotomous gender options (5.0%) and 1 participant (0.7%) did not fill in their gender. Age ranged from 18 to 70 years old ($M = 37.91$, $SD = 17.02$) and analysis of employment sectors reveals that the majority of participants work in healthcare and welfare (22.9%, $N = 32$) and commerce and services (22.9%, $N = 32$). Other smaller sectors include education, media and ICT. Participants' working period for their current organization varied greatly between less than two months (5.7%, $N = 8$) and longer than fifteen years (17.1%, $N = 24$). The amount of hours worked yields very balanced results between the options of working 16 to 24 hours, 25 to 32 hours, 33 to 40 hours and more than 40 hours per week.

Surveys that have been implemented in the research to investigate each of the variables could be answered with the use of Likert Scales, as can be seen in Appendix A. This scale contained either five or seven items, ranging from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly

Agree’, where the seven item scale also contained ‘Partly Disagree’ as well as ‘Partly Agree’. The Likert Scale has been fully written out in Appendix A.

To ensure confidentiality and ethical compliance, the questionnaires have been anonymized. Distinctive response id’s were ascribed to each participant, guaranteeing that the stored data is encrypted and solely available to the principal investigators of this research. Said data is safeguarded by a two-step verification and authentication and will be preserved for a period of ten years, conforming to the BSS Data Management Protocol. Additionally, participants had to actively give informed consent before partaking in the questionnaire. This consent demarcated the research’s objectives as well as its implications, data storage and the voluntary right to cooperate and withdraw from the study without any negative consequences.

Measures

Social Comparison

The independent variable, social comparison, is measured using two scales. The first of these scales is the Iowa-Netherlands Comparison Orientation Measure (INCOM), an 11-item scale developed by Gibbons and Buunk (1999), which employs a Likert response scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. This measure is commonly used in psychological and sociological research (e.g., Butzer & Kuiper, 2006) to comprehend how an individuals’ tendency to make social comparisons may impact behavior and interactions in several fields, among which (upward) social comparisons’ frequency and effect in organizational settings. Although this measure does not explicitly capture directionality of the social comparisons, it captures if these comparisons occur, reflected by questions like “I always pay a lot of attention to how I do things compared with how others do things”. This scale has a reliability coefficient of .74, suggesting an acceptable reliability.

Besides the INCOM, the Identification and Contrast Comparison scale is also implemented to measure social comparison. In specific, it is able to measure the downwards

or upwards direction of the comparison and differentiates between contrast versus identification comparisons, meaning that it measures four aspects. Contrast comparisons concern perceiving oneself as inconsistent with the comparison target, whereas identification comparisons concern perceiving oneself as consistent with the comparison target (Van der Zee et al., 2000). This measure allows gauging social comparisons more specifically in an organizational context. The scale contains statements such as “want to know how my job performance relates to that of others who are better at their job”. This scale by Van der Zee et al. (2000) has been previously adapted to be measuring comparisons in job-related situations in particular. The identification and contrast scale has shown to have an excellent reliability with $\lambda^2 = .90$. This scale has been split into two specific directions, where downward comparison with its reliability coefficient of .82 and upward comparison with $\lambda^2 = .88$ are both categorized as good reliability.

Job Satisfaction

The Job Satisfaction survey developed by Agho et al. (1992, p. 195) captures and evaluates an individuals' satisfaction with elements related to one's job, such as the extent of an employees' enthusiastic feelings towards their work and the enjoyment they find in working. Using six relatively short items, like “I am satisfied with my job for the time being” and “I like my job better than the average worker does”, in combination with five response items, this survey measures an individuals' job contentedness. The reliability of the job satisfaction scale is classified as good, as it reveals a λ^2 of .84.

Envy

The Benign and Malicious Envy Scale, often abbreviated to BeMaS, is incorporated into this study with its five item response scale and ten items (Lange & Crusius, 2014). This scale distinguishes the two forms of dispositional envy, revealing that envy is not always defined as a negative emotion. For example, feeling benignly envious can in fact be

motivating to get hands on a desired attribute or status (Crusius et al., 2021), which can be recognized in items such as “If someone has superior qualities, achievements, or possessions, I try to attain them for myself.” On the other hand, malicious envy reflects the emotion of an individual begrudging another with superior and desired attributes or status (Ng et al., 2023), which can be spotted in statements such as “If other people have something that I want for myself, I wish to take it away from them.” Thus, it assesses personality differences in one’s inclination to respond with either of the two envy forms in case of a comparison towards someone of a higher rank. The benign envy scale reflects a good reliability level with $\lambda^2 = .82$, whereas the malicious envy scale can even be labeled as being excellent in reflecting its reliability with $\lambda^2 = .93$.

Perceived Organizational Support

The Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (POS) evaluates the degree to which an individual employee feels assisted, endorsed and cared for by the company they work for. Additionally, it covers the extent of recognition they perceive to receive for their personal contributions, reflected by items like “The organization is willing to help me when I need a special favor.” This scale by Eisenberger et al. (1986) originally contained 36 items, of which the shortened version employed in this research contained only eight items. Other than the previous scales, the item response scale ranges from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree as it contains ‘Partly Disagree’ and ‘Partly Agree’ besides the other five known items, also being fully displayed in Appendix A. With $\lambda^2 = .92$, this scale shows excellent reliability, suggesting that it is tremendously reliable for estimating its respective constructs.

Important to note is that each of the scales in the questionnaire have been translated to Dutch, considering the country within which the questionnaire was distributed. The Job Satisfaction scale was initially published in English and not yet translated to Dutch. Therefore, it has been altered to the corresponding language to fit the questionnaire by two

distinct individuals to ensure academic accuracy. Note that other than the Job Satisfaction scale, all other scales have been previously translated to Dutch and implemented into precursory research by this thesis' principal investigator.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using SPSS software. To start with, the first item of the Job Satisfaction Scale, both the sixth and seventh items of the Perceived Organizational Support Scale and the eighth and tenth items of the Iowa-Netherlands Comparison Orientation Measure were recoded. Reversing these specific items aligns them with the right direction of the variables, assuring that for example a low score on the Job Satisfaction Scale persistently represents an individuals' lack of contentment with one's job.

Thereafter, participants' responses were cleaned in case of more than five missing responses per scale, such that the computed scale means of each variable allowed up to one missing item for the job satisfaction, benign envy, malicious envy, downward comparison and upward comparison scales. For the computed scale means of perceived organizational support, INCOM and the identification and contrast, up to two missing items were allowed. This means that the mean of each of the variables was calculated by averaging the items of a scale, although keeping in mind the missing count.

Correlation and regression analyses were executed with the intention of scrutinizing the relationships between upward and downward social comparison, job satisfaction, benign and malicious envy and perceived organizational support and to carefully examine its possible moderated mediation model. Furthermore, correlation tests were executed to reveal distinct connections between each of the aforementioned variables and reliability analyses exhibited individual variables' Guttman's lambda-2 statistic, which shows the variance that is due to true scores.

Assumption checks were also conducted to warrant the validity of the regression models. This revealed that the investigated assumptions of this study's normal distribution of the residuals as well as its linearity and homoscedasticity are supported. For example, the scatterplot shows a random distribution around the x-axis and suggests that linearity as well as homoscedasticity are met. However, a few outliers do give rise to the need for further investigation of these points. Finally, the VIF and Tolerance values exhibit that no significant multicollinearity issues arise within the study's model.

Lastly, model 7 from Hayes' PROCESS macro was employed to investigate the moderated mediation framework (Hayes, 2018). In analyzing, three distinct tests have been run with the dependent variable being job satisfaction and the independent variable alternating between INCOM, downward comparison and upward comparison. Also, both benign envy and malicious envy served as the mediators in these analyses and perceived organizational support as the moderator. Thus, this allows for a better acknowledgement of the individual influences of each type of comparison (i.e. comparisons in general or its direction) in combination with the mediating role of both types of envy and for the last two hypotheses in conjunction with the moderating role of POS as well.

Results

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Table 1 provides a better understanding of this study's data distribution, as these descriptive statistics demonstrate correlations between the key variables as well as their means and standard deviations. Table 1 exemplifies a small, negative and insignificant correlation between upward social comparison and job satisfaction, as well as between downward social comparison and job satisfaction ($r = -.15$). Interestingly, social comparisons in general, measured by the INCOM scale, does in fact significantly correlate to job satisfaction ($r = -.19, p < .01$), heralding that a mere comparison may be of greater

importance to one's job satisfaction than the actual up- or downwards direction of the comparison.

The correlation between benign and malicious envy displays that the constructs are related yet distinct ($r = .55, p < .01$). Correspondingly, POS negatively correlates comparably to both benign as well as malicious envy ($r = -.39, p < .01$; $r = -.48, p < .01$), signifying that when an employee feels that their efforts, ideas and well-being are more validated by the management, they exhibit significantly less envy. Also comparable effect sizes hold for benign envy and malicious envy correlating to social comparison ($r = .35, p < .01$; $r = .26, p < .01$) downward social comparison ($r = .42, p < .01$; $r = .34, p < .01$) and job satisfaction ($r = -.27, p < .01$; $r = -.36, p < .01$), respectively. This latter correlation shows that the relation between benign envy and job satisfaction is in contradiction with the anticipated framework, whereas the relation between malicious envy and job satisfaction is in accordance with it.

In line with previous research, the relationship between upward social comparison and both types of envy discloses a very similar positive and significant correlation for benign envy ($r = .29, p < 0.1$) and malicious envy ($r = .28, p < 0.1$). Also confirming precursory research is the fact that POS itself directly and positively contributes to job satisfaction in a significant manner ($r = .63, p < 0.01$). This strongly positive and significant relationship means that more perceived organizational support is associated with more job satisfaction.

Main Hypotheses Testing

Regarding the first hypothesis, one ought to turn to the correlation matrix displayed in Table 1, revealing that making social comparisons in general is significantly found to be negatively associated with one's job satisfaction ($r = -.19, p < 0.01$). The negative correlation between upward social comparisons and job satisfaction supports the anticipated negative direction in the proposed model ($r = -.15$). Yet, due to the lack of required statistical significance, hypothesis 1 is therefore not supported by enough evidence to be confirmed.

As for the second till the fifth hypotheses, analysis occurred via SPSS with PROCESS macro's model 7, that includes both the mediation and the moderated mediation framework (Hayes, 2018). Analyses for all hypotheses were done twice, once with the INCOM as the independent variable and once with the upward social comparison as the independent variable. In these two different analyses, envy served as the mediator (in hypotheses 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b) and POS as the moderator (in hypotheses 3a and 3b). This second hypothesis anticipates that the relationship between upward social comparison and job satisfaction is mediated by malicious envy, such that upward social comparison is associated with increased malicious envy, which is related to reduced job satisfaction. Regarding the indirect and actually mediating effects of upward comparison on job satisfaction through malicious envy, one sees a slight negative relation, which is not statistically significant (Effect = $-.18$, *BootSE* = $.10$, *BootLLCI* = $-.37$, *BootULCI* = $.00$). The direct effect of upward comparison on job satisfaction, which is what remains of the total effect after accounting for the mediator, shows that this relation is also insignificant as zero falls in the confidence intervals (Effect = $-.07$, *SE* = $.13$, $t = -.54$, $p = .593$, 95% CI [$-.32$, $.18$]). The total effect contains both these direct and indirect paths and was not significant too (Effect = $-.25$). These direct and indirect effects are shown in Table 2 and Table 3, respectively. Due to the statistical insignificance of the indirect effect, hypothesis 2a is refuted as the negative association of upward social comparisons with job satisfaction is not found to be mediated by malicious envy.

In accordance with hypothesis 2a, hypothesis 2b states that the relationship between upward social comparison and job satisfaction is mediated by benign envy, such that upward social comparison is associated with increased benign envy, which is related to increased job satisfaction. The indirect effects as exhibited in Table 4, demonstrate that upward comparison is negatively and statistically insignificantly related to job satisfaction via mediating effects of Benign Envy (Effect = $-.05$, *BootSE* = $.05$, *BootLLCI* = $-.14$, *BootULCI* = $.04$). Moreover,

the same findings of the negative and insignificant direct effect of upward comparison on job satisfaction for hypothesis 2a are relevant for the inquiry into this specific hypothesis. The total effect of this relation was also statistically insignificant (Effect = $-.12$), showing that even when combining the effects, they are not strongly associated with job satisfaction. Thus, following the mediation analysis from model 7 in PROCESS macro, emerges the rejection of this study's third hypothesis.

Penultimately, hypothesis 3a proclaims the moderated mediation framework, declaring that perceived organizational support (POS) moderates the relationship between upward social comparison and malicious envy, such that higher POS is associated with a reduction in the negative relationship between malicious envy and job satisfaction. Table 3 shows the indirect effect of upward comparison (IV) on job satisfaction (DV) through malicious envy (mediator), reflecting that for all levels of POS as the moderator, the effects were statistically insignificant as well because the confidence intervals include zero. Due to the non-statistically significant outcomes of this investigated moderated mediation relationship, hypothesis 3a is not confirmed.

Lastly, hypothesis 3b presents that perceived organizational support (POS) moderates the relationship between upward social comparison and benign envy, such that higher POS is associated with a reduction in the positive relationship between benign envy and job satisfaction. Results of the indirect effects of upward comparison on job satisfaction through benign envy as the mediator in Table 4 indicate that at a low, medium and high level of POS as the moderator, the indirect effects were statistically insignificant. As each of the investigated levels of the moderated mediation framework contain zero and therefore reflect statistically insignificant results, the last hypothesis of this research is also to be refuted.

Discussion

Surprisingly, results reveal that none of the five hypotheses can be confirmed, meaning that the anticipated model visualized in Figure 1 is unsuitable in predicting the relationships among the variables. Thus, this is not in line with the expected framework that was based on previous theories and studies as discussed in the introductory section. For example, even though the relationship between upward social comparison and job satisfaction is negative, as was predicted, the first hypothesis is not found to be supported. In spite of this, making social comparisons in general (measured through the INCOM) was in fact found to moderately be linked to a decreased job satisfaction. Moreover, both hypothesis 2a and 2b were refuted as there was no strong evidence to link upward social comparison to job satisfaction through either malicious or benign envy as a mediating factor. However, these two hypotheses still were partly supported by correlational values that were positive between upward social comparison and both benign and malicious envy, and negative between malicious envy and job satisfaction. Furthermore, the indirect effect of malicious envy was negative, as expected, yet lacking evidence of a strong relationship. Finally, the anticipated moderated mediation framework described in both hypothesis 3a and 3b is not supported, as perceived organizational support does not appear to meaningfully change the positive influence upward social comparisons have on an employee's level of both types of envy.

Based on the affective events theory (AET) by Weiss & Cropanzano (1996), this research posited that upward social comparisons and perceived organizational support provoke envious emotions, in turn regulating job satisfaction. However, after comparing this study's results to relevant research that formed the basis of the framework, one surprisingly finds the hypotheses only partly predict the relations in an accurate manner. Specifically, this study discovered that when employees make social comparisons to someone who is better off only minimally linked to them being less satisfied with their jobs, contrary to what was anticipated. One possible explanation for this small effect may be the counteracting

mediating effects of benign and malicious envy, in which their positive and negative impacts combined together may cancel each other out and therefore contribute to an effect close to zero. This could perhaps also explain the presence of the nuanced literature on the upward social comparison-job satisfaction relationship, denoting that there may be other variables at play in this relationship that need to be examined, thereby giving suggestions for future research.

Moreover, the dual-pathway of envy's mediation appears to function differently from what was anticipated based on reviewed research as well (Cohen-Charash, 2009; Lan et al., 2021). Thus, no exhaustive conclusions may be drawn from neither the malicious nor benign mediation pathway, as these variables do not strongly indicate to influence the connection between perceiving someone as superior, subsequently developing envious sentiment and thereafter devaluing their job in case of malicious envy and enhanced job satisfaction in case of benign envy. Possibly, this may insinuate that the harmful or motivational envy do not invariably result from socially contrasting with someone higher-level, or that malicious and benign envy do not consistently precede an employees' decreased or increased job contentment, respectively. Other explanations for these contradictory outcomes may be that similar research employed a larger sample size, made use of different ways of data collection and/or used additional variables in this complex framework.

Also, outcomes of the moderated mediation contradict the previous findings stating that a diminished experience of envy following social comparison would occur as employees feel they are appreciated and supported by the company, thereby moderating the negative and positive influence that malicious and benign envious emotions have on employees' job satisfaction. Thus, even though a company may eminently support and value their employees, this does not strongly mitigate the harmful effects of malicious envy and the motivational effects of benign envy to affect their job contentment. However, POS has in fact been found

to strongly positively be linked to job satisfaction, as was stated by Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002). Because when one feels that their organization cares for their contributions and wellbeing, socioemotional demands are satisfied. This enhances the anticipation of recognition following outstanding performance as well as communicating the aid when employees may need it. Also in line with the study by Rhoades & Eisenberger (2002), a strong negative relation of POS with both types of envy has been discovered. This implies that even though POS does not directly moderate the proposed mediation, it does vastly affect employees in reducing their envious emotions in organizational settings and thereby proposes that nurturing workplace milieus are associated with lessened envy and possibly consequently stimulate a protective and harmonious working climate. Thus, even though POS was not found to function as a moderator, it does have meaningful direct influences on both job satisfaction and the two forms of envy. Possibly, context may play a role in explaining the differences between these outcomes, as other factors may have underlying contributing effects in these complex workplace relations.

Limitations

A sample of only Dutch-speaking participants may limit the study's generalizability of findings to other (e.g. non-Western) countries where organizational settings probably include other vital cultural elements that need to be taken into account when assessing the workplace relations. Additionally, the use of convenience sampling and the fact that the sample was rather homogeneous, with a large majority of the participants working in paid employment contribute to a lack of generalizability to workplace dynamics in other domains such as working in freelance or volunteering sectors. The rather small sample size causes more difficulty in discovering significant results and possibly causing Type II errors (Sedgwick, 2014). Future research may overcome these issues with a bigger sample size.

Furthermore, methodological limitations comprise the cross-sectional character of the research, as it does not allow for causal inferences to be made over time between the aforementioned variables because data collection occurred solely at one moment. Also, as data is self-reported, participants may fall prey to response bias or social desirability bias, meaning that participants do not respond truthfully or that they reply in a socially acceptable or desirable manner (Fisher, 1993; Paulhus, 1999), thereby skewing findings. Another bias that may occur due to the self-report nature of the research is common method bias, possibly leading to augmented associations between the variables that are scrutinized (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Nonresponse bias may also be the case, in which participants substantially deviate in terms of measured variables from individuals who did not participate, therefore possibly affecting the study's findings to a great extent (Groves, 2006).

Finally, another limitation is the multifarious manner in which benign and malicious envy may be interpreted. Contextual factors like organizational backgrounds and cultural factors may lead to interpreting the constructs differently, potentially giving rise to an affected construct validity of the BeMaS and impacting the assessment accuracy of envy.

Future study may benefit from a more diverse and larger sample. Relatedly, incorporating more variables, for instance other mediators or moderators, may conduce a better understanding of the underlying relationships between the variables studied in this investigation. This could enable one to investigate if these relationships also hold across other contexts and domains.

Moreover, future study may profit from altering the research design, as the current cross-sectional study does not allow for causal inferences to be made over time between the variables because data collection occurred solely at one moment. A longitudinal design would enable better comprehension into the dynamics of the aforementioned variables over time. Besides this, future study may also benefit from an experimental design in which

variables, such as levels of POS, are controlled for in order to give a more detailed picture of the underlying connections between the studied variables. In line with this, is the fact that using interviews or open-ended questionnaires may provide a better understanding of the underlying mechanisms.

Implications

Even though each of the five proposed hypotheses were to be refuted, this research made vital theoretical contributions. It investigated the different effects of envy in the relation between social comparisons and job satisfaction, while taking into account the possible role of perceived organizational support. Although the hypotheses were not fully supported, this study's findings did exhibit that upward social comparisons positively related to both benign and malicious envy and that malicious envy was indeed negatively associated with job satisfaction. Additionally, this research revealed that POS appears to strongly be related to both types of envy as well as job satisfaction, reflecting that it is a crucial variable in organizational environments.

This research challenges previous literature and highlights that the associations between the variables are in fact more compound than what was formerly believed to be the case. By that means it underscores the necessity of re-investigating and developing an adapted and more accurate theoretical framework. As this research investigates the possible individual mediating effects of benign and malicious envy as well as the moderating effect of POS, it advances in a better apprehension of dynamics in the workplace.

Practical implications therefore hold that the standard approaches based on the theoretical background provided in the introduction do not apply beneficially and accurately in all settings. One way to undertake this, is by employing an individual rather than a collective approach in recognition and support methods, thereby taking into account a person's distinctions of extents to which they communicate upward social comparison,

benign envy and malicious envy. Moreover, organizations may embrace a strategy that emanates from evidence, enabling companies to use real-life data and therefore bringing about more room for individually fitted recognition and support. This consequently affects an employees' job satisfaction as the data and statistics recognize the influence that workplace dynamics have and then may (individually) adjust the fruitful strategies.

Conclusion

Through a complex interplay of various organizational factors and emotional responses, upward social comparisons were expected to ultimately influence job satisfaction. Specifically, this study aimed to investigate the relationships between upward social comparisons, job satisfaction, benign as well as malicious envy through a mediating dual-pathway and perceived organizational support as a moderator.

Contrary to the study's hypotheses, results revealed that the expected relationships were not supported. This means that the evidence reviewed herein indicates that comparative tendencies at the workplace with someone better off is not linked to a lowered contentment of an individuals' job and that neither malicious nor benign envy mediate this relation. It also states that the degree to which upward social comparisons relate to job satisfaction via dual-pathways of envy do not depend on the extent of perceived organizational support.

This study's findings put forward that there are more compound organizational mechanisms at play in the upward social comparison-job satisfaction relationship than previously thought. Thus, this underscores the need to thoroughly re-examine influencing factors to develop a more adapted and accurate framework.

The fact that the cross-sectional nature of this research does not allow for causal inferences to be made over time is one of this study's limitations. Thus, future research may benefit from opting for a longitudinal design. Furthermore, employing a bigger sample size and using qualitative data collection may contribute to a more exhaustive understanding of

the complex relationship between the aforementioned variables. Thus, future research ought to take this into account in order to paint a complete picture on supportive organizational environments which accentuate an employees' job satisfaction.

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Figure 1: Visualization of the expected dual-pathway mediation model and the moderating effects of perceived organizational support.

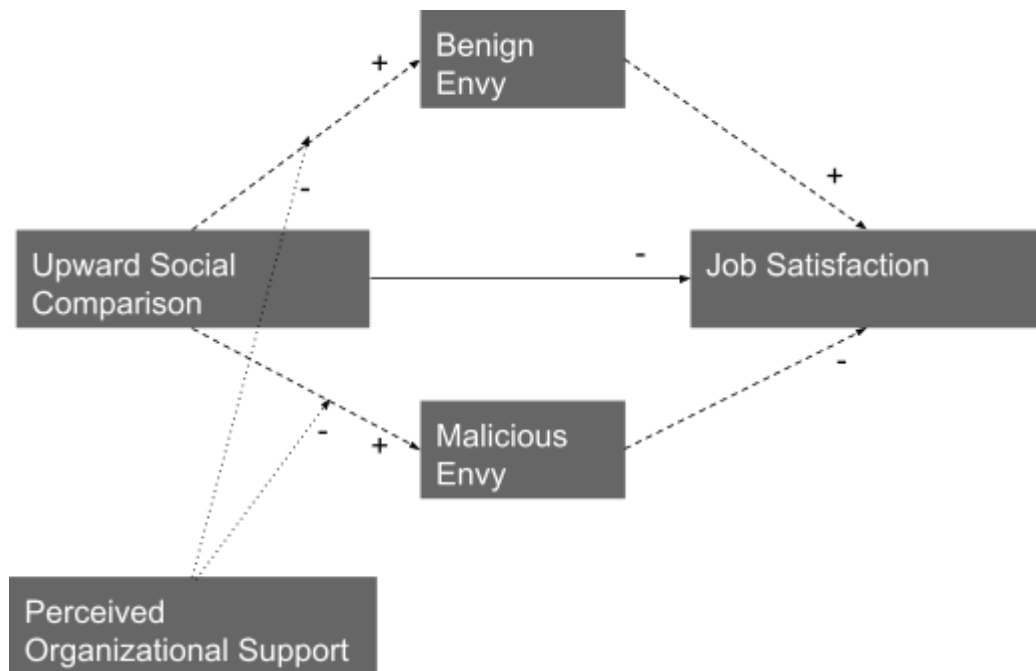


Table 1*Descriptive Statistics and Correlations between the Variables*

	N	M	SD	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
1. INCOM	140	3.36	.48							
2. Downward	140	3.56	.65	.58**						
3. Upward	140	3.50	.81	.56**	.65**					
4. JobSat	140	4.99	1.23	-.19**	-.15	-.15				
5. Benign Envy	140	2.01	.72	.35**	.42**	.29**	-.27**			
6. Malicious Envy	140	1.92	.75	.26**	.34**	.28**	-.36**	.55**		
7. POS	140	5.25	1.16	-.10	-.18*	-.12	.63**	-.39**	-.48**	

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Note. JobSat = Job Satisfaction; POS = Perceived Organizational Support; INCOM = Iowa-Netherlands Comparison Orientation Measure; Downward = Downward comparison from the Identification and Contrast scale; Upward = Upward comparison from the Identification and Contrast scale.

Table 2*Direct Effects of Upward Comparison on Job Satisfaction as derived from Model 7 in**PROCESS macro*

Effect	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-.07	.13	-.54	.593	-.32	.18

Table 3

Conditional Indirect Effects of Upward Comparison on Job Satisfaction through Malicious Envy as derived from Model 7 in PROCESS

JOBSAT → MALICIOU → UPWARD

POS	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
4.27	-.18	.10	-.37	.00
5.50	-.06	.05	-.15	.03
6.25	.00	.06	-.08	.17

Note. JOBSAT = Job Satisfaction; POS = Perceived Organizational Support; UPWARD = Upward comparison from the Identification and Contrast scale; MALICIOU = Malicious Envy.

Table 4

Conditional Indirect Effects of Upward Comparison on Job Satisfaction through Benign Envy as derived from Model 7 in PROCESS macro

JOBSAT → BENIGN → UPWARD

POS	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
4.27	-.05	.05	-.14	.04
5.50	-.03	.03	-.10	.03
6.25	-.02	.03	-.08	.03

Note. JOBSAT = Job Satisfaction; POS = Perceived Organizational Support; UPWARD = Upward comparison from the Identification and Contrast scale. BENIGN = Benign Envy.

Appendix A

Survey:

Informatie over het onderzoek: versie voor deelnemers

“Sociale vergelijkingen op de werkvloer”

PSY-2324-S-0347

- Waarom ontvang ik deze informatie?

U bent uitgenodigd om deel te nemen aan deze studie omdat u 18 jaar of ouder en werkzaam bent. Dit onderzoek wordt uitgevoerd door Sterre Debets, masterstudente Work,

Organizational and Personnel Psychology aan de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. Zij is verantwoordelijk voor het verzamelen, verwerken en analyseren van de onderzoeksgegevens en zal de resultaten publiceren. Dr. Dick Barelds begeleidt dit onderzoek. Het onderzoek start op 10 april 2024 en wordt afgerond op 7 mei 2024.

- Moet ik deelnemen aan deze studie?

Deelname aan deze studie is vrijwillig. Echter, uw toestemming is vereist. Lees deze informatie zorgvuldig door en stel eventuele vragen die u heeft. Pas daarna zou u moeten besluiten of u wilt deelnemen. Indien u kiest niet deel te nemen, hoeft u niet uit te leggen waarom en zullen er geen negatieve gevolgen voor u zijn. Dit recht is op elk moment van toepassing, zelfs nadat u heeft ingestemd met deelname aan de studie.

- Waarom dit onderzoek?

Het doel van deze studie is om meer inzicht te krijgen in de relatie tussen opwaartse sociale vergelijking, werktevredenheid, afgunst en waargenomen organisatieondersteuning.

- Wat houdt deelname in?

Allereerst wordt u gevraagd om uw toestemming voor deelname. Vervolgens vult u een vragenlijst in. Deze vragenlijst meet verschillende aspecten van sociale vergelijkingen, werktevredenheid, afgunst en waargenomen organisatieondersteuning en neemt ongeveer 6

minuten in beslag. De vragenlijst vraagt u in eerste instantie om enkele persoonlijke gegevens, zoals geslacht, leeftijd en de sector waarin u werkt. Daarna begint de eigenlijke meting, bestaande uit vragen en stellingen waarbij u uw mate van instemming aangeeft. Het is belangrijk om te beseffen dat er geen goede of foute antwoorden zijn.

- Wat zijn de implicaties van deelname?

Deelname aan deze studie draagt bij aan de uitbreiding van kennis over de relatie tussen opwaartse sociale vergelijking, werktevredenheid, afgunst en waargenomen organisatieondersteuning. Er zijn geen nadelige effecten verbonden aan deelname. Risico's gerelateerd aan de verwerking van persoonsgegevens worden hieronder besproken.

- Hoe worden uw gegevens behandeld?

Het doel van de gegevensverwerking is uitsluitend voor het schrijven van een masterthesis voor de Master Work, Organizational and Personnel Psychology. De verzamelde persoonsgegevens omvatten: geslacht, leeftijd, sector en arbeidssituatie. Deze gegevens worden verwerkt en geanalyseerd in SPSS door Sterre Debets van de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. Er zijn geen risico's voor het verzamelen of verwerken van gevoelige persoonsgegevens. Onderzoeksgegevens worden anoniem verzameld om de identiteit van deelnemers te beschermen. Gegevens worden gekoppeld aan een deelnamenummer.

Gegevens worden opgeslagen in een beveiligde omgeving, beschermd door een persoonlijk wachtwoord. Echter, ze zullen na de einddatum van het onderzoek worden vernietigd en dus niet beschikbaar zijn. Tot 21 juni 2024 heeft u het recht om uw gegevens in te zien, te corrigeren en te verwijderen. Dit kan door een e-mail te sturen naar

s.b.d.debets@student.rug.nl

- Wat moet u verder nog weten?

U kunt te allen tijde vragen stellen over het onderzoek: nu, tijdens het onderzoek en achteraf, door een e-mail te sturen naar de betrokken onderzoeker: s.b.d.debets@student.rug.nl. Indien

u vragen of zorgen heeft over uw rechten als deelnemer aan het onderzoek of over de uitvoering van de studie, kunt u ook contact opnemen met de Ethische Commissie voor Gedrags- en Maatschappijwetenschappen van de Universiteit van Groningen: ec-bss@rug.nl. Voor vragen of zorgen over hoe uw persoonsgegevens worden behandeld, kunt u contact opnemen met de Functionaris voor Gegevensbescherming van de Universiteit van Groningen: privacy@rug.nl. Als deelnemer aan het onderzoek hebt u het recht op een kopie van deze onderzoeksinformatie, die u kunt verkrijgen door een screenshot te maken of door een foto te nemen met een camera of telefoon.

Informed consent

PSY-2324-S-0347

- Ik heb de informatie over het onderzoek gelezen. Ik heb voldoende gelegenheid gekregen om vragen te stellen.
- Ik begrijp waar het onderzoek over gaat, wat er van mij verwacht wordt, de mogelijke implicaties van deelname, hoe mijn gegevens worden verwerkt en mijn rechten als deelnemer.
- Ik begrijp dat deelname aan het onderzoek vrijwillig is. Ik kies er uit eigen vrije wil voor om deel te nemen. Ik kan me op elk moment uit het onderzoek terugtrekken. Als ik besluit me terug te trekken, hoef ik niet uit te leggen waarom. Terugtrekken zal geen negatieve gevolgen voor mij hebben.

Biografische gegevens

Geslacht

Wat is uw geslacht?

(Geef uw geslacht aan.)

Man

Vrouw

Ik definieer mijzelf als ...

Zeg ik liever niet

Leeftijd

Wat is uw leeftijd? (vul een geheel getal in, bijvoorbeeld 24)

Sector

(Geef aan in welke sector u werkzaam bent.)

Gezondheidszorg en -welzijn

Handel en dienstverlening

ICT

Justitie, veiligheid en openbaar bestuur

Milieu en Agrarische sector

Media en communicatie

Onderwijs, cultuur en wetenschap

Techniek, productie en bouw

Toerisme, recreatie en horeca

Transport en logistiek

Anders, namelijk: ...

Soort werkverband

(Geef aan wat voor werk u doet.)

Ik werk in loondienst

Ik werk als zzp'er

Ik doe vrijwilligerswerk

Ik doe een stage

Ik heb geen werk

Ambtsperiode

(Geef aan hoe lang u werkt bij uw huidige organisatie.)

Minder dan twee maanden

Twee maanden tot een jaar

1-2 jaar

2-5 jaar

5-10 jaar

10-15 jaar

Langer dan 15 jaar

Aantal uur werkzaam

(Geef aan hoeveel uur u gemiddeld per week werkzaam bent bij uw huidige organisatie.)

Minder dan 16 uur

16-24 uur

25-32 uur

33-40 uur

Meer dan 40 uur

Antwoord schalen

5 en 7 Likert schaal:

“Sterk mee oneens”

“Oneens”

(“Een beetje mee oneens”)

“Niet mee eens, niet mee oneens”

“Eens”

(“Een beetje mee eens”)

“Sterk mee eens”

Job Satisfaction Scale (Agho, Price, & Mueller, 1992, p. 195).

De onderstaande stellingen gaan over hoe tevreden u bent met uw baan. Geef aan in welke mate (1-5) u het eens bent met onderstaande stellingen.

Ik verveel me vaak op mijn werk

Ik voel me redelijk tevreden met mijn huidige baan

Ik ben voorlopig tevreden met mijn baan

De meeste dagen ben ik enthousiast over mijn werk

Ik vind mijn baan leuker dan de gemiddelde andere werknemer

Ik vind echt plezier in mijn werk

Perceived Organizational Support Scale (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986).

De onderstaande stellingen gaan over de organisatie waar u voor werkt. Geef aan in welke mate (1-7) u het eens bent met onderstaande stellingen.

Mijn organisatie geeft om mijn mening

Mijn organisatie geeft echt om mijn welzijn

Mijn organisatie houdt sterk rekening met mijn doelen en waarden

Wanneer ik een probleem heb, is er hulp beschikbaar vanuit mijn organisatie

Mijn organisatie zou een eerlijk gemaakte fout van mijn kant vergeven

Als de kans zich aandient, dan zou mijn organisatie misbruik van mij maken

Mijn organisatie kijkt weinig naar mij om

Mijn organisatie is bereid om mij te helpen, mocht ik een speciale gunst nodig hebben

Benign and Malicious Envy Scale BeMaS (Lange & Crusius, 2014).

De volgende vragen gaan over afgunst. Afgunst is de emotie die iemand ervaart wanneer hij/zij graag de kwaliteiten, de prestaties of bezittingen van iemand anders zou willen hebben. Het ervaren van afgunst wordt ook wel benijden genoemd. Het is belangrijk om te begrijpen dat gevoelens van afgunst natuurlijk zijn en zich op verschillende manieren kunnen uiten.

Geef per stelling aan in hoeverre (1-5) u het ermee eens bent.

Ik voel me minderwaardig ten opzichte van mensen die beter zijn dan ik op een belangrijk gebied.

Als ik afgunst naar iemand ervaar, hoop ik dat ze in de toekomst falen.

Soms ervaar ik afgunst naar anderen die een hogere status hebben dan ik.

Ik benijd anderen zozeer dat ik wens dat ze in de toekomst zullen falen.

Ik benijd degenen die kwaliteiten hebben die ik graag zou willen bezitten.

Als ik anderen benijd, wens ik vaak dat ze in de toekomst zullen falen.

Ik benijd anderen die succesvoller zijn dan ik.

Als ik iemand benijd, zou ik die persoon op de een of andere manier willen schaden.

Soms voel ik afgunst als iemand beter is dan ik op een belangrijk gebied.

Als ik afgunst voel, wens ik vaak de benijdende persoon te schaden.

The Iowa-Netherlands Comparison Orientation Measure (INCOM) (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999).

Het volgende gedeelte richt zich op de mate waarin u geneigd bent uw eigen vaardigheden, prestaties en andere aspecten van het leven te vergelijken met die van anderen. Geef per stelling aan in hoeverre (1-5) u het ermee eens bent.

Ik vergelijk mezelf vaak met anderen met betrekking tot wat ik in het leven heb bereikt.

Ik besteed altijd veel aandacht aan hoe ik dingen doe in vergelijking met hoe anderen dingen doen.

Ik wil altijd weten wat anderen in een vergelijkbare situatie zouden doen.

Als ik wil weten hoe goed ik iets heb gedaan, vergelijk ik wat ik heb gedaan met wat anderen hebben gedaan.

Ik vergelijk vaak hoe goed het gaat mijn dierbaren (partner, familieleden, etc.) in vergelijking met anderen om mij heen.

Ik vergelijk mezelf vaak met anderen.

Als ik iets wil leren, kijk ik hoe anderen datzelfde doen.

Ik vind het leuk als iemand anders slechter is dan ik in iets.

Ik probeer vaak te weten te komen wat anderen denken die zich in dezelfde situatie bevinden als ik.

Ik vergelijk mezelf altijd met anderen die iets slechter uitvoeren dan ik.

Als ik iemand ontmoet die ergens beter in is dan ik, probeer ik mezelf te verbeteren.

Identification and contrast comparison (Van der Zee, Buunk, Sanderman, Botke, & van den Bergh, 2000).

Ook de volgende vragen gaan over de mate waarin u zich vergelijkt met anderen. Geef per stelling aan in hoeverre (1-5) u het ermee eens bent.

Ik vergelijk mezelf vaak met collega's die qua werkprestaties op hetzelfde niveau zijn als ik.

Ik voel een band met collega's die met vergelijkbare uitdagingen op het werk worden geconfronteerd.

Ik vind het nuttig om mijn werkprestaties te vergelijken met die van collega's die op hetzelfde niveau zitten als ik.

Ik identificeer me met collega's die te maken hebben met vergelijkbare werkgerelateerde problemen.

Ik heb het gevoel dat ik kan ontwikkelen door mezelf te vergelijken met collega's die in een vergelijkbare functie zitten.

Ik vergelijk mezelf vaak met collega's die beter presteren dan ik om te zien hoe ik kan verbeteren.

Ik voel me gemotiveerd als ik mijn werkprestaties vergelijk met die van succesvollere collega's.

Ik wil graag weten hoe mijn werkprestaties zich verhouden tot anderen die het beter doen in hun werk.

Mezelf vergelijken met collega's die meer hebben bereikt, helpt me om hogere doelen voor mezelf te stellen.

Ik voel me geïnspireerd als ik mezelf vergelijk met collega's die vooruitgaan in hun carrière.