AN EXAMINATION OF THE ROLE OF GOAL

ORIENTATION IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN

PERCEIVED JOB SEARCH PROGRESS AND JOB

SEARCH SELF-EFFICACIES

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In 2014, Liu et al. (2014) published a study demonstrating that job search self-efficacy was dependent upon goal hierarchy in job search. Individuals seeking jobs will have self-efficacy related to the type of job they hope to obtain, which is the primary goal in job search. Job seekers will also have self-efficacy related to their job search behaviors used to help obtain their desired jobs. The job search behaviors are a manifestation of the subgoals in the job search process. In this dissertation, I examine whether job search goal orientations are also hierarchically oriented in the job search process. I test whether employment goal orientations and job search behavior goal orientations are between-person moderators of the within-person relationships of perceived job search progress with employment self-efficacy and job search behavior self-efficacy. None of these relationships were found to be statistically significant. However, I did find that at the within-person level, job search goal orientations did have direct effects on job search self-efficacies. In addition, the results demonstrate that goal orientations are hierarchically related to job search self-efficacies.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Job search in the fields of sociology, economics, and industrial/organizational

psychology has been an important area of research for over three decades (Manroop &

Richardson, 2016). The job search process is a dynamic self-regulation process with the

goal of employment (Kanfer, Wanberg, & Kantrowitz, 2001). The importance of the role

of job search has taken on even more significance recently because of the disruption to

the economy caused by the Covid-19 pandemic (U.S. Fed., 9/2020). Insights that can be

gained into the job search process are particularly important during this time of struggles

with damage to the economy caused by the pandemic. Given that the job search process

can take time and that there are associated stressors with being unemployed, persistence

is key. I argue that it is critical to understand the self-regulation of behavior for success.

An important factor in job search is an individual's self-efficacy related to the job

search. The Kanfer, Wanberg, and Kantrowitz (2001) study finds that job search behavior

is positively related to finding employment and that job search self-efficacy is positively

related to job search behavior. Wanberg's (2012) study finds similar results, showing that

self-efficacy in job search is related to positive job search outcomes. Thus, job search

self-efficacy appears to be an important predictor of a successful job search process (Saks, Zikic, & Koen, 2015).

It has recently been recognized that studies of job search self-efficacy often confound employment self-efficacy and job search behavior self-efficacy (Liu, Wang, Liao, & Shi, 2014; Saks et al., 2015), which reveals mixed results. Employment self-efficacy is related to job seekers' confidence in their ability to obtain the jobs they desire, whereas job search behavior self-efficacy is related to job seekers' confidence in their ability to perform the job search behaviors necessary to obtain the jobs (e.g., develop a quality resumé, perform an effective job interview). Liu et al. (2014) explain that job search self-efficacy and employment self-efficacy serve different goals and thus need to be examined separately, or at least matched to the analogous end goal (i.e., job search activities or employment), to better understand how self-efficacy aids job seekers. In addition, theories of self-regulation predict that much of the variance in self-efficacy is within-person as individuals receive feedback from the environment, which changes their efficacy judgments. Yeo and Neal (2013) even note that between-person studies of self-efficacy cannot really assess the influence of self-regulation on self-efficacy. Accordingly, Liu et al. (2014) find that at the within-person level of job search behavior, self-efficacy is positively related to job search behavior, but employment self-efficacy is negatively related to job search behavior. A later study (da Motta Veiga, Turban, Gabriel, & Chawla, 2018) finds that at the between-person level, employment self-efficacy is positively related to job search effort.

It is important to note that both of these studies include the variable "perceived job search progress" as the antecedent to the job search self-efficacies. A much-cited article by Wanberg, Zhu, and van Hooft (2010) includes perceived job search progress as an

independent variable in all seven of their hypotheses, recognizing its important role in the job search process. Lopez-Kidwell, Grosser, Dineen, and Borgatti (2013) also investigate perceived job search progress as a primary factor in the job search process. These researchers recognize the importance of job seekers' "perceived job search progress" in their job search process. Nevertheless, none of the researchers consider what may affect the job seeker's perceived job search progress beyond the job seeker's job search behavior. I contend that this is a significant oversight in job search research. I propose that job seekers' perceived job search progress will be moderated by their job search goal orientations. It is job seekers' job search goal orientation that will provide the perspective through which each assesses their job search progress and its concomitant effect on job search self-efficacy.

In this dissertation, I will analyze goal orientations within a hierarchical goal structure, with employment goal orientations acting as a moderator of the relationship between perceived job search progress and employment self-efficacy, and job search behavior goal orientations acting as a moderator of the relationship between perceived job search progress and job search behavior self-efficacy. The application of goal orientation theory to the job search process should provide valuable insights into the hierarchical goal nature of the relationship between perceived job search progress and employment self-efficacy and job search behavior self-efficacy.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Dweck (1986) originally conceptualized goal orientation as a two-dimensional process. She proposed that students had either a learning goal orientation or a performance goal orientation. The motivation of an individual with a learning goal orientation is to learn for the sake of understanding. The motivation of an individual with a performance goal orientation is to outperform others. Subsequently, other researchers proposed that the performance goal orientation should be further defined as either performance prove goal orientation or performance avoid goal orientation (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; Elliot & Church, 1997). The performance prove goal orientation focuses on competing with others to demonstrate their capabilities. Individuals with a performance avoid goal orientation sought to avoid showing a lack of competence. Elliot and McGregor (2001) propose a "2 × 2 Goal Framework" whereby they argue that the learning goal orientation should also be split into learning approach and learning avoid. Elliot and McGregor (2001) use the terminology "mastery-approach" and "mastery-avoidance" for the learning goal orientations, and "performance-approach" and "performance-avoidance" for the performance goal orientations. I will use the Elliot and McGregor (2001) labels in the present dissertation.

A highly cited meta-analysis by Payne, Youngcourt, and Beaubien (2007) on goal orientation did not include mastery-avoidance goal orientation because of the limited number of studies that had examined this variable with the particular outcomes in their study. Subsequently, many researchers continue the practice of not including mastery-avoidance in their designs while including the other three goal orientations (e.g., Dierdorff, Surface, & Brown, 2010; Beck & Schmidt, 2013). Nevertheless, mastery-avoidance goal orientation may help evaluate goal hierarchy in the job search process where job seekers need to learn the best job search strategies. Therefore, I will follow the recommendation of Elliot and McGregor (2001) and include mastery-avoidance goal orientation as a useful and necessary component of the analysis. By including mastery-avoidance goal orientation, I can examine how this orientation is applied to goal attainment relative to mastery-approach goal orientation or performance-avoidance goal orientation.

Although Creed, King, Hood, and McKenzie (2009) and van Hooft and Noordzij (2009) examine goal orientation within the context of job search activities, neither study examines the different dimensions of goal orientation effects on the relationship between perceived progress in job search and job search self-efficacy. No subsequent studies have been identified that examine the impact of goal orientation on the critical relationship of perceived progress in job search on job search behavior, as mediated by job search self-efficacy.

Goal orientation has been analyzed as both a trait and a state (DeShon & Gillespie, 2005; Payne et al., 2007). In addition, it has been identified to function as a domain-specific construct, with both trait and state characteristics (DeShon & Gillespie, 2005). I will treat job search goal orientations as domain-specific goal orientations because this allows for an appropriate match between goals and their prospective behaviors.

Another important consideration in the analysis of the role of goal orientation in job search is the concept of goal hierarchy. Kruglanski, Shah, Fishback, Friedman, Chun, & Sleeth-Keppler (2002) propose a system of goal hierarchy consisting of the primary goal, subgoals, and means. First, individuals identify or decide upon their objectives, or primary goals. Subgoals are developed to assist in the process of obtaining the primary goal. The subgoals are goals for the actions necessary to obtain the primary goal. The means are the actions to accomplish the subgoals. Thus, there are three levels in the goal hierarchy – primary goals, subgoals, and means to achieve the subgoals. The relevance of the subgoals and means to an individual are in their usefulness in obtaining the primary goal. This is critical to understanding self-regulation in the job search process because the higher the goal in the goal hierarchy, the more important the goal is to the individual (DeShon & Gillespie, 2005).

In job search, the primary goal is the employment goal, which is the specific job that the job seeker hopes to obtain. The primary goal includes aspects such as occupation, position, salary, location, etc. The subgoals are the goals for the job search process. Examples of activities in the job search process are to develop an effective resumé, submit a certain number of applications per week, and contact an employment counselor. Performing the actions to accomplish the subgoals are the means. Liu et al. (2014) recognize that the role of self-efficacy in job search is dependent upon goal hierarchy in job search, and they provide evidence of the presence of two hierarchical types of self-efficacy in job search – employment self-efficacy and job search behavior self-efficacy. By separating self-efficacy in this manner, Liu et al. (2014) provide an explanation as to why prior studies found mixed results of the effect of self-efficacy on job search behaviors. Employment self-efficacy is

related to an individual's career goal, which is the primary goal, and job search behavior self-efficacy is related to the subgoals that are pursued to obtain the primary goal.

The insight of Liu et al. (2014) concerning goal hierarchy in job search self-efficacy can also be used to show how job search goal orientation affects job search behaviors through the two job search self-efficacies. The four employment goal orientations are related to the primary goal and are an antecedent to employment self-efficacy. Likewise, the four job search behavior goal orientations are related to the subgoals and are antecedent to job search behavior self-efficacy. For the purposes of the present study, the goal orientations are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Job Search Goal Orientations

Employment Goal Orientations Related to Employment Self-Efficacy
Employment Performance-Approach Goal Orientation
Employment Performance-Avoidance Goal Orientation
Employment Mastery-Approach Goal Orientation
Employment Mastery-Avoidance Goal Orientation
Job Search Behavior Goal Orientations Related to Job Search Behavior Self-Efficacy
Job Search Behavior Performance-Approach Goal Orientation
Job Search Behavior Performance-Avoidance Goal Orientation
Job Search Behavior Mastery-Approach Goal Orientation
Job Search Behavior Mastery-Avoidance Goal Orientation

Because of the nature of the goal hierarchy and because the job search process unfolds over time, consistent with da Motta Veiga et al. (2018), I hypothesize relationships at the within-person (over time) and between-person levels. This approach allows for the examination of the moderating effects and direct effects of stable between-person variables on dynamic within-person processes. For example, Sun, Song, and Lim (2013) use a similar design with a between-person-level moderator of promotion and prevention focus to examine the within-person relationship between job search self-efficacy and number of interview offers, as mediated by job search effort. Specifically, I test the moderation effects of

between-person job search goal orientations upon the within-person relationship of perceived job search progress and job search effort, as mediated by employment self-efficacy and job search behavior self-efficacy. The proposed relationships are provided in Figure 1.

Hypothesis Development

The Model in Figure 1 illustrates that a job seeker's employment self-efficacy and job search behavior self-efficacy are determined by the job seeker's perceived job search progress *and* job search goal orientations. The job search process is specific to each individual because of their perceptions of their job search progress (via feedback), but efficacy regarding the process can be affected by job seekers' job search goal orientations – employment goal orientation and job search behavior goal orientation. As noted by Liu et al. (2014), within-person studies can provide insight into dynamic self-regulation practices. By studying between-person differences of the effect of job search goal orientations on the dynamic within-person process of job search, a greater understanding can be obtained of the within-person development of the critical job search characteristic of self-efficacy.

Wanberg et al. (2010) conduct a study investigating the job search process using the approach and avoidance motivation constructs, but approach and avoidance motivation is not the same as goal orientation. The use of goal orientation theory would seem to be especially pertinent to the analysis of the relationships of perceived job search progress with employment self-efficacy and job search behavior self-efficacy because of the way in which job search progress information would be viewed through the lens of goal orientation. To interpret perceived job search progress, it is necessary to do so through the lens of all four goal orientations instead of using the simpler approach-avoidance analysis because of goal hierarchy in the job search process – employment goals and job search behavior goals.

8

Time *t*

Job Search
Goal Orientations

Between-Person Level

- -

Within-Person Level

Time *t* + 1

(+/-)

Employment
Self-Efficacy

Perceived
Job Search
Progress

(+)

(-)

Job Search
Effort

(+)

Number of
Interview Offers

(+)

Job Search
Behavior
Self-Efficacy

(+)

Figure 1. Hypothesized Model
(+) = Positive Relationship
(-) = Negative Relationship

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Liu et al. (2014) recognize the importance of goal hierarchy in their analysis of job search self-efficacy. They demonstrate how job search self-efficacy is distinct for employment self-efficacy and job search behavior self-efficacy. Employment self-efficacy is self-efficacy related to a job seeker's primary goal of obtaining the desired type of job. Job search behavior self-efficacy is self-efficacy related to a job seeker's subgoals of performing the job search behaviors necessary to achieve employment goals. Liu et al. (2014) demonstrate that a job seeker's employment self-efficacy, related to the primary goal, and job search behavior self-efficacy, related to the subgoals, are separate and distinct with differing effects on job search behaviors. Likewise, my argument is that goal hierarchy is also necessary to the analysis of the effect of goal orientations on perceived job search progress. I explain below how goal hierarchy is essential to explaining how employment goal orientations and job search behavior goal orientations moderate the relationship of perceived job search progress with employment self-efficacy and job search behavior self-efficacy.

An important assumption here is that the job seeker's career goals have already been chosen and the job search behavior process has begun. If a job seeker decides to pursue different career goals, once the new goals are selected, the job search behavior process will begin anew. Thus, I focus on the effects of goal orientations on employment self-efficacy and job search behavior self-efficacy after career goals have been selected and job search behaviors to attain the career goals have begun.

I seek to use goal orientation theory to extend the work of Liu et al. (2014) on the relationships of perceived job search progress with employment self-efficacy and job search behavior self-efficacy. Liu et al. (2014) find both of the relationships to be positive. In addition, they examine the effect of internal attribution as a moderator of both relationships.

Internal attribution explains an additional 2% of the variance in both employment self-efficacy and job search behavior self-efficacy. I propose that a potentially more important moderator of the relationship of perceived job search progress with employment self-efficacy and job search behavior self-efficacy is goal orientation. I expect to find that goal orientations will have either a positive effect, a negative effect, or no effect on the relationships, depending on the type of goal orientation. I seek to build upon the important findings of Liu et al. (2014) by applying goal orientation theory to the job search process.

In job search goal hierarchy, employment is the primary goal and job search behaviors are the subgoals chosen to assist in achieving the primary goal. Once the employment goal is chosen, a performance-approach goal orientation will result in a desire by the job seeker to outcompete other job seekers in obtaining a desirable job. Payne et al. (2007) find no relationship between performance-approach goal orientation and task-specific self-efficacy. One potential reason why there was no relationship between performance-approach goal orientation and task-specific self-efficacy in the Payne et al. (2007) meta-analysis is a misalignment in the goal hierarchy between the primary goal (employment goal) and the regulatory process to achieve that goal (job search behavior goals).

As the primary goal in a multi-goal process, the employment goal has greater importance to the job seeker with a performance-approach goal orientation. Task-oriented goals (from the Payne et al. (2007) meta-analysis) and job search behavior goals here are subgoals intended to ultimately achieve the employment goal. For job seekers with an employment performance-approach goal orientation, their primary focus will be in outperforming other job seekers with their employment goal, not in their ability to perform the supporting job search behavior actions. Elliot and Church (1997) find that the antecedents to performance-

approach goal orientation are achievement motivation and fear of failure. Dineen, VandeWalle, Noe, Wu, and Lockhart (2017) argue that relations are inconsistent for performance-approach goal orientation because it is comprised of both achievement motivation and fear of failure. Another important concept to understand the role of performance-approach goal orientation in job search goal hierarchy is discrepancy detection, as proposed by DeShon & Gillespie (2005). In the goal pursuit process, individuals will monitor the progress of their goals at the different levels in their goal hierarchy. Any discrepancy detected that threatens the goal pursuit will be addressed to correct the discrepancy.

I argue that for job seekers with a performance-approach goal orientation, their focus for achievement motivation will be on the employment goal, which is the primary goal in the goal hierarchy. Conversely, the fear of failure for the employment goal will be reduced because of discrepancy detection and the realization that if failure occurs, it will be through failure of the job search behavior actions. Thus, in job search goal hierarchy, employment performance-approach goal orientation will not be equally influenced by achievement motivation and fear of failure. This will result in a positive relationship between employment performance-approach goal orientation and employment self-efficacy.

Hypothesis 1. *Employment performance-approach goal orientation moderates the within-person relationship between perceived job search progress and employment self-efficacy such that the positive within-person relationship is stronger for job seekers with an employment performance-approach goal orientation.*

Elliot and Thrash (2002) identify significant personality differences between individuals with an approach personality and those with an avoidant personality. Individuals with

approach motivations exhibit behaviors of "extraversion, positive emotionality, and behavioral activation system"; in contrast, individuals with avoidance motivations exhibit behaviors of "neuroticism, negative emotionality, and behavioral inhibition system" (Elliot & Thrash, 2002, p. 813). Due to the self-regulatory nature of the job search process, job seekers with high employment performance-avoidance goal orientation focus on the concern to demonstrate their ability to obtain a desirable job compared to other job seekers, resulting in a negative effect on employment self-efficacy. Indeed, in a meta-analysis, Judge, Heller, and Mount (2002) obtain a negative relationship between neuroticism and self-efficacy. Those job seekers are negative about seeking work because of their focus on failure and low expectations that they will find a job. Seeking to avoid the failure of job attainment will generate negative expectations such that performance-avoidance goal orientation will be negatively related to employment self-efficacy.

Hypothesis 2. *Employment performance-avoidance goal orientation moderates the within-person relationship between perceived job search progress and employment self-efficacy such that the positive within-person relationship is weaker for job seekers with an employment performance-avoidance goal orientation.*

Before moving to the mastery goal orientations, I explore the expected relationships between performance-approach and performance-avoidance goal orientations and job search behavior self-efficacy. Based on regulatory focus and goal orientation, I posit that job search behavior performance-approach goal orientation will have little or no relationship with job search behavior self-efficacy because the focus of the job seeker will be on the employment goal, not the job search behavior goals. The employment goal is the primary goal in the job search goal hierarchy. Thus, the primary focus of a job seeker with a performance-approach

goal orientation will be to obtain a better job than other job seekers, not to outperform other job seekers in their job search behaviors. The impact of achievement motivation and fear of failure will be minimal for job search behavior activities. This will result in job search behavior performance-approach goal orientation having little or no effect as a moderator on the relationship between perceived job search progress and job search behavior self-efficacy. The rationale of goal hierarchy applicable to employment performance-approach and job search behavior performance-approach will also be applicable to the performance-avoidance goal orientations. The job seeker with a performance-avoidance goal orientation will be more focused on the employment outcome and less focused on the job search behavior activities. Thus, I expect job search behavior performance-avoidance goal orientation will have little or no effect as a moderator on the relationship between perceived job search progress and job search behavior self-efficacy.

People with an employment mastery-approach goal orientation will be confident in their ability to learn about and identify a desirable employment goal. However, since the employment goal has been chosen, there is no longer a need to learn additional information or master knowledge about alternative career options. This same logic applies to employment mastery-avoidance goal orientation. Once the employment goals are selected, the focus of a job seeker with a mastery goal orientation is on job search behaviors. At this point, the mastery goal orientations are not relevant to the employment goals. The mastery orientations in relation to career goals will not be reactivated unless the job seeker chooses to change career goals. I predict that both employment mastery-approach goal orientation and employment mastery-avoidance goal orientation will have little or no effect as moderators of

the relationship between perceived job search progress and employment self-efficacy during the job search behavior process.

Mastery-approach and mastery-avoidance goal orientations become very important once job search behaviors begin. The personalities of job seekers with either an approach temperament or an avoidance temperament are relevant to mastery goal orientations. The job seeker's ability to learn how to best perform job search activities and to learn about new types of job search activities will be a key component of a successful job search process (van Hooft, Wanberg, & van Hoye, 2013). The more job seekers believe in their ability to learn and master job search behavior activities, the more confidence they will have in a successful job search outcome. This higher confidence will result in job search behavior mastery-approach goal orientation acting as a positive moderator between perceived job search progress and job search behavior self-efficacy. This is the basis for the third hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3. *Job search behavior mastery-approach goal orientation moderates the within-person relationship between perceived job search progress and job search behavior self-efficacy such that the positive within-person relationship is stronger for job seekers with a job search behavior mastery-approach goal orientation.*

Conversely, the apprehension of not being able to learn or master job search activities will lead to a lack of confidence. The concern of not being able to learn what are the best job search activities to find a job will result in job search behavior mastery-avoidance goal orientation weakening the relationship between perceived job search progress and job search behavior self-efficacy. This analysis leads to Hypothesis Four.

Hypothesis 4. *Job search behavior mastery-avoidance goal orientation moderates the within-person relationship between perceived job search progress and job search*

behavior self-efficacy such that the positive within-person relationship is weaker for

job seekers with a job search behavior mastery-avoidance goal orientation.

If H3 is supported, the results will correspond with findings in the Payne et al. (2007) meta-analysis, which found a positive relationship between learning goal orientation (mastery-approach goal orientation here) and task-specific self-efficacy. As noted above, the Payne et al. (2007) meta-analysis does not examine learning-avoidance (mastery-avoidance) goal orientation because of the limited research using this variable. Payne et al. (2007) do find a negative relationship between performance-avoidance goal orientation and task-specific self-efficacy. The job search behavior self-efficacy here is a task-specific self-efficacy. It will be a unique finding if the hypotheses are supported and performance-avoidance goal orientation is uncorrelated with job search behavior self-efficacy, whereas mastery-avoidance goal orientation has a negative moderating effect on job search behavior self-efficacy. This finding would seem to indicate that some prior studies using different outcomes may have confounded these two avoidance goal orientations.

Following is a summary of the predicted relationships after the employment goal has been chosen and job search behaviors have begun.

Table 2: Predicted Relationships

Goal Orientation	Moderation Effect on Relationship Between Perceived Job Search Progress and Employment Self-Efficacy
Employment Performance-Approach	Strengthen
Employment Performance-Avoidance	Weaken
Employment Mastery-Approach	Uncorrelated
Employment Mastery-Avoidance	Uncorrelated

Goal Orientation	Moderation Effect on Relationship Between Perceived Job Search Progress and Job Search Behavior Self-Efficacy
Job Search Behavior Performance-Approach	Uncorrelated
Job Search Behavior Performance-Avoidance	Uncorrelated
Job Search Behavior Mastery-Approach	Strengthen
Job Search Behavior Mastery-Avoidance	Weaken

In conclusion, my most significant contribution will be to expound upon the important work by Liu et al. (2014) that demonstrated the necessity of applying goal hierarchy theory to job search self-efficacy to achieve a deeper understanding of the role of self-efficacy in the job search process. I will apply job search goal orientation theory to further illuminate how job search self-efficacy develops. Another contribution is the use of unemployed job seekers for my sample. Liu et al. (2014) and others recognize the value of studies utilizing this demographic for research into job search. Hopefully, the use of this demographic for the sample will provide important insights. My third contribution is in the analytic method. With few exceptions, job search has been studied at the between-person level to examine how different characteristics affect job search actions (e.g., Brown, Cober, Kane, Levy, & Shalhoop, 2006; Creed et al., 2009). However, I argue that job search should be studied at the within-person level to examine the dynamic processes within a person during the process (e.g., Liu et al., 2014; Wanberg et al., 2010). There has been a recent call for a combination of the two approaches to "have a more holistic understanding of the job search process" (da Motta Veiga et al., 2018, p. 241). Therefore, I will use a between-person comparison of goal orientations to examine the within-person relationship of perceived job search progress, job search self-efficacy, and job search effort.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Recent studies on job search using graduating college students as participants have

recognized the value of using unemployed adults in studies on job search (Sun et al.,

2013; Liu et al., 2014; da Motta Veiga & Gabriel, 2016). Most studies rely on first-time

job seekers (such as graduating college students) who may not generalize to the larger

population of older, experienced workers (Liu et al., 2014) because of a lack of work

experience and different life stressors. Thus, I use unemployed adult workers. I collect

data from unemployed job seekers in the United States and the United Kingdom. The

survey firm Prolific Academic Ltd. provide the participants for the survey. Prolific

Academic Ltd. is an online platform that is recognized as a reliable source of quality

survey participants for academic research (Peer, Brandimarte, Samat, & Acquisti, 2017;

Sherf & Morrison, 2020; Sherf, Venkataramani,& Gajendran, 2019). There are 201

unemployed job seekers participating in the study.

I use five inclusion criteria for the study. First, participants must be unemployed for

less than one year. I exclude the long-term unemployed because their lack of success in

finding employment may cause changes in the attitudes, approaches, and efforts of their

job searches. Next, survey respondents are required to be actively looking for full-time employment. I want to ensure that job seekers are committed to their job search effort. The third requirement is that the participants must be between the ages of 25 and 50. This restriction reduces the possibility of age-related differences in re-employment likelihood (e.g., Wanberg, 2012). The fourth requirement is that survey respondents must have at least one year of full-time work experience. This restriction is because there may be differences between first-time or inexperienced job seekers. The final requirement is that the survey participant must have at least two years of post-high school education. This restriction is to reduce the impact of occupation level (e.g., Wanberg, 2012).

The average unemployment duration was 28 weeks ($SD = 16.51$). The participants' average work experience was 9.57 years ($SD = 6.85$). The average age was 32.49 years ($SD = 6.85$). The sample was 57.4% female, with 66% of the participants from the UK. The race of the participants was White for 72.8%. Following are the participants' education levels: vocational degree – 8.5%, associate degree – 12.8%, bachelor's degree – 59.5%, master's degree – 17.9%, and doctoral/law/medical degree – 1.3%.

Procedures

The study participants completed an initial questionnaire containing questions on demographic information and the first survey about their goal orientations. On Friday of each week, the survey participants were sent an online survey concerning their job search efforts. The survey participants were sent eight weekly surveys after the initial survey, for a total of nine surveys. The surveys were discontinued if a participant obtained a job. In addition, surveys were excluded if the survey was completed in less than three minutes, which was judged to be a careless response (Curran, 2016). If the participant failed more than one

attention check question, the survey was omitted. If a participant requested his/her survey to be excluded, the survey was not included in the results (7 out of 1,183 responses).

Measures

Perceived job search progress was measured with a six-item scale from Wanberg et al. (2010). Responses were on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Scores were obtained by computing the mean of the item responses. A sample item is "I made good progress on my job search this past week." The internal consistency estimate (coefficient alpha) for scores on this scale were $\alpha = 0.96$ (averaged across all nine weeks).

Employment self-efficacy was measured with a three-item scale from Liu et al. (2014). Responses were on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Scores were obtained by computing the mean of the item responses. A sample item is "I am optimistic about finding a job." The internal consistency estimate (coefficient alpha) for scores on this scale were $\alpha = 0.86$ (averaged across all nine weeks).

Job search behavior self-efficacy was measured with a three-item scale from Liu et al. (2014). Responses were on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Scores were obtained by computing the mean of the item responses. A sample item is "I can handle job search related tasks (e.g., phone or face-to-face interviews) well." The internal consistency estimate (coefficient alpha) for scores on this scale were $\alpha = 0.79$ (averaged across all nine weeks).

Job search effort was measured with a two-item scale from Saks and Ashforth (2002). Responses were on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Scores were obtained by computing the mean of the item responses. A sample item is

"Spent a lot of time looking for job opportunities." The internal consistency estimate (coefficient alpha) for scores on this scale were $\alpha = 0.95$ (averaged across all nine weeks).

Number of interview offers was measured with a one-item scale: "How many interview offers did you receive in the past week?"

There were eight job search goal orientation measures. All eight of the measures were adapted from Elliot and McGregor (2001) by changing the referent to either job search behavior goal orientation or employment goal orientation. Each measure contains three items. Following is a sample item from each measure. In addition, the internal consistency estimates (coefficient alpha) are given for scores on the measures (averaged across all nine weeks).

Employment Performance-Approach Goal Orientation ($\alpha = 0.93$)
"It is important for me to obtain a better job than other people also searching for a job."

Employment Performance-Avoidance Goal Orientation ($\alpha = 0.82$)
"My goal in my job search is to avoid obtaining an undesirable job."

Employment Mastery-Approach Goal Orientation ($\alpha = 0.89$)
"I want to learn as much as possible about my job opportunities."

Employment Mastery-Avoidance Goal Orientation ($\alpha = 0.93$)
"I am concerned that I may not learn all there is to learn about my job opportunities."

Job Search Behavior Performance-Approach Goal Orientation ($\alpha = 0.96$)
"It is important for me to do better in my job search behaviors than other people also searching for a job."

Job Search Behavior Performance-Avoidance Goal Orientation ($\alpha = 0.85$)
"My goal in my job search is to avoid performing my job search behaviors poorly."

Job Search Behavior Mastery-Approach Goal Orientation ($\alpha = 0.91$)
"I want to learn as much as possible about different job search behaviors."

Job Search Behavior Mastery-Avoidance Goal Orientation ($\alpha = 0.94$)
"I worry that I may not learn all that I possibly could about different job search behaviors."

Analysis

Perceived job search progress, employment self-efficacy, job search behavior self-efficacy, and the goal orientations were measured at time t. I measured job search effort every week but used time $t + 1$ in all the analyses. For the same reason, I used interview offers at $t + 2$ for all the analyses.

Because number of interview offers is a count variable, I assumed a Poisson distribution in analyses regarding the number of interview offers. Because responses are nested over time within-person, I used multilevel path analysis with estimation in Mplus Version 8.6. These analyses partition variability within- and between-person to provide unbiased parameter estimates. I first examined the within-person variance of my weekly variables, and the results show the weekly variances demonstrated sufficient within-person variance to test predictions (perceived job search progress = .70, employment self-efficacy = .54, job search behavior self-efficacy = .37, job search effort = .56). The direct effect of perceived job search progress was controlled for in equations for the dependent variables. I group mean centered the predictors.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

To assess the discriminant validity of the study constructs, I conducted a confirmatory

factor analysis (CFA) with maximum likelihood using Mplus to assess the fit of my

model's three independent variables and eight moderators, for a total of 11 factors. Four

models were tested – a 1-factor model, a 3-factor model, a 4-factor model, and an 11-

factor model. Because the CFA included the goal orientations, I conducted the analysis at

the between-person level. The 11 factors are the antecedent variable (perceived job

search progress), the eight goal orientations, and the two self-efficacies.

Hypothesized 11-Factor Model
Perceived Job Search Progress
Employment Performance-Approach Goal Orientation
Employment Performance-Avoidance Goal Orientation
Employment Mastery-Approach Goal Orientation
Employment Mastery-Avoidance Goal Orientation
Job Search Behavior Performance-Approach Goal Orientation
Job Search Behavior Performance-Avoidance Goal Orientation
Job Search Behavior Mastery-Approach Goal Orientation
Job Search Behavior Mastery-Avoidance Goal Orientation
Employment Self-Efficacy
Job Search Behavior Self-Efficacy

I also compared the fit of my hypothesized 11-factor model with several alternative

models. The 1-factor model included the items for all 11 variables. The three-factor

model was perceived job search progress, the eight goal orientations grouped as one factor, and the two self-efficacies grouped as one factor. The alternative four-factor model was perceived job search progress, the grouped four employment goal orientations, the grouped four job search goal orientations, and the two self-efficacies grouped into one factor. Model fit was determined by using chi square (χ^2), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), comparative fit index (CFI), and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI). Lower values for χ^2 and RMSEA indicate better model fit, and higher values for CFI and TLI indicate better model fit. As seen below in Table 3, the 11-factor model produced the best fit to the data with significantly lower values for χ^2 and RMSEA and the highest values for CFI and TLI. The 11-factor model clearly provided the best model fit.

Table 3. Measurement Models

Model	χ^2 Value	$\Delta\chi^2$	*df*	Δdf	RMSEA	90% CI	CFI	TLI
11-Factor	795.61	—	440	—	0.06	0.06 - 0.07	0.94	0.92
4-Factor	3,066.88	2,271.27	489	49	0.16	0.15 - 0.17	0.53	0.48
3-Factor	4,192.34	3,396.73	510	70	0.19	0.18 - 0.19	0.32	0.30
1-Factor	5,327.83	4,532.22	519	79	0.21	0.21 - 0.22	0.12	0.10

χ^2 = Chi-Square Test of Model Fit, *df* = Degrees of Freedom, RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation, 90% C.I. = 90% Confidence Interval, CFI = Comparative Fit Index, TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index

Following are two tables containing descriptive information from the study. Table 4 contains demographic information. Table 5 presents the means and standard deviations of the variables and the within-person and between-person correlations. The standard deviations are presented at both the within-person level and between-person level.

Table 4. Demographic Information

Variable	M	Between-Person SD
1. Unemployment duration (weeks)	28	16.51
2. Work experience (years)	9.57	6.85
3. Age (years)	32.49	6.85
4. Gender (female)	57.4%	
5. Nationality (from the UK)	66.0%	
6. Race		
White	72.8%	
Asian	11.5%	
Black	7.7%	
Hispanic	2.1%	
Other	5.9%	
7. Education		
Bachelor's Degree	59.5%	
Master's Degree	17.9%	
Associate Degree	12.8%	
Vocational Degree	8.5%	
Doctoral/Law/Medical Degree	1.3%	

N = 201 participants

Table 5. Variable Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations

Variable	M	Within-Person SD	Between-Person SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Perceived Job Search Progress	2.80	1.23		(.96)	.42	.28									.22	-.02
2. Employment Self-Efficacy	2.97	1.05			(.86)	.35									.02	-.01
3. Job Search Behavior Self- Efficacy	3.96	0.87			.50	(.79)									.05	-.03
4. Employment Performance-Approach Goal Orientation	2.98		0.97		.18	.32	(.93)									
5. Employment Performance-Avoidance Goal Orientation	3.70		0.77		.09	.16	.49	(.82)								
6. Employment Mastery-Approach Goal Orientation	3.81		0.73		.25	.45	.40	.40	(.89)							
7. Employment Mastery-Avoidance Goal Orientation	3.26		0.87		-.01	-.02	.30	.30	.59	(.93)						
8. Job Search Behavior Performance-Approach Goal Orientation	3.05		0.98		.15	.27	.87	.47	.54	.37	(.96)					
9. Job Search Behavior Performance-Avoidance Goal Orientation	3.60		0.77		.03	.22	.52	.68	.65	.53	.62	(.85)				
10. Job Search Behavior Mastery-Approach Goal Orientation	3.52		0.86		.20	.32	.42	.35	.88	.67	.52	.67	(.91)			
11. Job Search Behavior Mastery-Avoidance Goal Orientation	3.13		0.93		.01	.02	.32	.30	.63	.91	.38	.59	.75	(.94)		
12. Job Search Effort	3.37	1.23			.03	.40	.29	.18	.42	.20	.37	.42	.41	.24	(.95)	.04
13. Number of Interview Offers	0.13	0.46			.19	.15	.16	.00	.14	.01	.14	.06	.13	.02	.09	

$N = 201$ participants. Correlations below the diagonal are between-person correlations. Correlations above the diagonal are within-person correlations. The alpha reliabilities are shown on the diagonal. All correlations between persons (below the diagonal) equal to or greater than |.14| are statistically significant. All correlations within persons (above the diagonal) equal to or greater than |.06| are statistically significant.

Given that a portion of the hypothesized model in the present study builds upon the findings of Liu et al. (2014), the first objective was to conduct a constructive replication of their model. The relationships I tested between employment self-efficacy and job search effort and between job search behavior self-efficacy and job search effort are very similar to Liu et al. (2014). The relationships tested between perceived job search progress and employment self-efficacy and between perceived job search progress and job search behavior self-efficacy are identical to Liu et al. (2014). I did not include internal attribution as a moderator of these two relationships as was done in the Liu et al. (2014) model. The correlation between job search effort and number of interview offers provides a comparable examination of job search success as the Liu et al. (2014) test of job search behavior and number of job offers. All of the above-described tests are at the within-person level. Thus, I provided a test of a constructive replication of the Liu et al. (2014) model at the within-person level.

In the analysis, the path between employment self-efficacy and job search effort was negative, as predicted, but was not statistically significant ($b = -0.03$; $p = 0.484$). The other relationships in the model were statistically significant. Thus, I partially constructively replicated Liu et al. (2014). Following are the results of my model.

Table 6. Constructive Replication of the Liu et al. (2014) Model

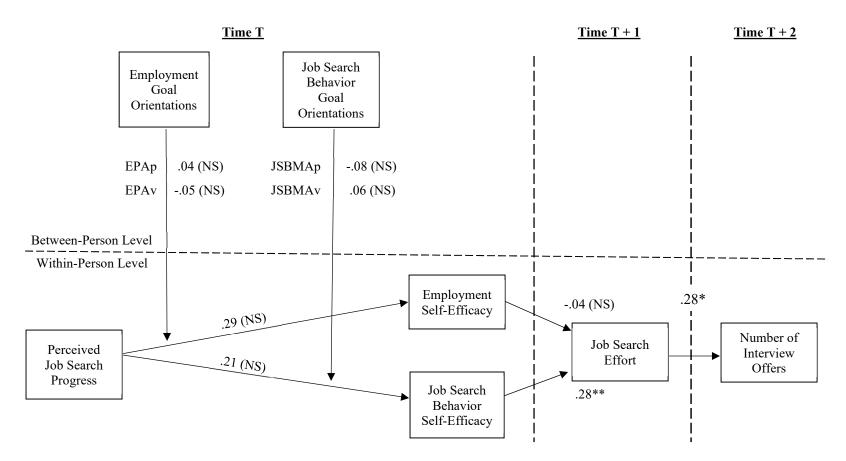|	ESE		JSBSE		JSE		NIO	
Variable	**b**	**SE**	**b**	**SE**	**b**	**SE**	**b**	**SE**
Intercepts	3.00**	(.08)	4.01**	(.09)	2.46**	(.25)	.12	(.26)
Level 1 Predictor Variables – Within-Person Level								
PJSP	.25**	(.02)	0.13**	(.02)	0.07*	(.04)		
ESE					-0.03	(.05)		
JSBSE					0.25**	(.06)		
JSE							0.28**	(.06)

N = 201 participants; *n* = 1,178 observations for PJSP, ESE, and JSBSE; *n* = 919 observations for JSE
Notes: *$p <$.05, **$p < .01$, two-tailed. PJSP = Perceived Job Search Progress, ESE = Employment Self-Efficacy, JSBSE = Job Search Behavior Self-Efficacy, JSE = Job Search Effort, NIO = Number of Interview Offers

H1 proposed that at the between-person level, the moderating effect of employment performance-approach goal orientation would strengthen the positive within-person relationship between perceived job search progress and employment self-efficacy. H2 proposed that at the between-person level, the moderating effect of employment performance-avoidance goal orientation would weaken the positive within-person relationship between perceived job search progress and employment self-efficacy. H3 proposed that at the between-person level, the moderating effect of job search behavior mastery-approach goal orientation would strengthen the positive within-person relationship between perceived job search progress and job search behavior self-efficacy. H4 proposed that at the between-person level, the moderating effect of job search behavior mastery-avoidance goal orientation would weaken the positive within-person relationship between perceived job search progress and job search behavior self-efficacy.

The hypotheses were tested in one omnibus path model for each model using Mplus. In the model, job search effort was measured at $t + 1$ and number of interview offers were measured at $t + 2$ to accurately reflect their temporal relationship. All four of the hypotheses were found to be unsupported because none of the moderating effects were statistically significant. The results are presented in Table 7 and displayed on the proposed model in Figure 2.

Table 7. Between-Person Moderation Effects

Variable	ESE b	ESE SE	JSBSE b	JSBSE SE	JSE b	JSE SE	NIO b	NIO SE
Intercepts	3.07*	(1.41)	3.58**	(.82)	2.41**	(.31)	0.13	(.33)
Level 1 Predictor Variables – Within-Person Level								
PJSP	0.29	(.26)	0.21	(.31)	0.07	(.04)		
ESE					-0.04	(.05)		
JSBSE					0.28**	(.10)		
JSE							0.28*	(.12)
Level 2 Predictor Variables – Between-Person Level								
EPApGO	0.08	(.13)						
EPAvGO	-0.08	(.28)						
PJSP × EPApGO	0.04	(.04)						
PJSP × EPAvGO	-0.05	(.04)						
JSBMApGO			0.37	(.19)				
JSBMAvGO			-0.27**	(.08)				
PJSP × JSBMApGO			-0.08	(.06)				
PJSP × JSBMAvGO			0.06	(.04)				

N = 201 participants; n = 1,178 observations for PJSP, ESE, and JSBSE; n = 919 observations for JSE
Note: *p < .05, **p < .01, two-tailed, PJSP = Perceived Job Search Progress, ESE = Employment Self-Efficacy, JSBSE = Job Search Behavior Self-Efficacy, JSE = Job Search Effort, NIO = Number of Interview Offers, EPApGO = Employment Performance-Approach Goal Orientation, EPAvGO = Employment Performance-Avoidance Goal Orientation, JSBMApGO = Job Search Behavior Mastery-Approach Goal Orientation, JSBMAvGO = Job Search Behavior Mastery-Avoidance Goal Orientation

Figure 2. Between-Person Moderation Effects
*p < .05, **p < .01, NS = Not Statistically Significant

Because the between-person goal orientations did not have a moderating effect, I tested to see whether within-person goal orientations had a moderating effect on the within-person relationships of perceived job search progress with employment self-efficacy and with job search behavior self-efficacy. These relationships were also not statistically significant. Following are the results of those tests.

Table 8. Within-Person Moderation Effects

Relationship Moderating Goal Orientation (GO) Variable (Interactions)	*b*	*SE*	Two-Tailed *p*-Value
Perceived Job Search Progress and Employment Self-Efficacy			
Employment Performance-Approach GO	.05	(.05)	.28
Employment Performance-Avoidance GO	.01	(.05)	.86
Employment Mastery-Approach GO	-.08	(.06)	.15
Employment Mastery-Avoidance GO	.01	(.04)	.82
Perceived Job Search Progress and Job Search Behavior Self-Efficacy			
Job Search Behavior Performance-Approach GO	-.02	(.03)	.45
Job Search Behavior Performance-Avoidance GO	-.05	(.03)	.16
Job Search Behavior Mastery-Approach GO	-.03	(.03)	.33
Job Search Behavior Mastery-Avoidance GO	.02	(.03)	.58

The above analysis reveals that goal orientations at both the between-person level and the within-person level were not statistically significant moderators of the relationships between perceived job search progress and employment self-efficacy or job search behavior self-efficacy.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The focus of my dissertation was to extend the work by Liu et al. (2014) on the

opposing effects of employment self-efficacy and job search behavior self-efficacy in the

job search process by applying the goal hierarchy framework to investigate the

moderating effects of job search goal orientations. The first step in the process was to

conduct a constructive replication of the Liu et al. (2014) findings. A successful

constructive replication of Liu et al. (2014) would provide the basis with which to

contribute to the literature on the job search process. Replication studies have been

recognized as a necessary and valuable component of management research (Bamberger,

2019).

I was unable to provide a constructive replication of the Liu et al. (2014) base model.

In addition, the hypothesized cross-level interactions involving goal orientations were not

supported. Employment goal orientations and job search behavior goal orientations are

not between-person moderators of the within-person relationships of perceived job search

progress with employment self-efficacy and with job search behavior self-efficacy. These

results demonstrate that the relationships between the job seeker's employment self-

efficacy and job search behavior self-efficacy with the job seeker's perceived job search progress are not dependent on levels of goal orientation.

I was able to constructively replicate the Liu et al. (2014) model when I modeled the four hypothesized goal orientation variables as within-person direct effects rather than cross-level between-person effects. This was achieved when the eight job search goal orientations were included as direct effects on the two self-efficacies at the within-person level in the model. The four employment goal orientations were modeled to have direct effects on employment self-efficacy. Also, the four job search behavior goal orientations were modeled to have direct effects on job search behavior self-efficacy. Both of the dependent variables were included in the model. Following are the model results showing the constructive replication.

Table 9. Base Model Including Eight Job Search Goal Orientations

	ESE		JSBSE		JSE		NIO	
Variable	*b*	*SE*	*b*	*SE*	*b*	*SE*	*b*	*SE*
Intercepts	2.98**	(.07)	3.96**	(.07)	2.95**	(.21)	0.14**	(.28)
Level 1 Predictor Variables – Within-Person Level								
PJSP	0.23**	(.03)	0.10**	(.02)	0.08*	(.04)		
ESE					-0.08*	(.04)		
JSBSE					0.18**	(.05)		
JSE							0.23**	(.08)
EPApGO	0.13**	(.04)						
EPAvGO	-0.08	(.05)						
EMApGO	0.09	(.05)						
EMAvGO	-0.06	(.04)						
JSBPApGO			0.02	(.03)				
JSBPAvGO			0.06	(.03)				
JSBMApGO			0.07*	(.03)				
JSBMAvGO			-0.06*	(.03)				

$N = 201$ participants; $n = 1,178$ observations for PJSP, ESE, and JSBSE; $n = 919$ observations for JSE;
Note: *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, two-tailed, PJSP = Perceived Job Search Progress, ESE = Employment Self-Efficacy, JSBSE = Job Search Behavior Self-Efficacy, JSE = Job Search Effort, NIO = Number of Interview Offers, EPApGO = Employment Performance-Approach Goal Orientation, EPAvGO = Employment Performance-Avoidance Goal Orientation, EMApGO = Employment Mastery-Approach Goal Orientation, EMAvGO = Employment Mastery-Avoidance Goal Orientation, JSBPApGO = Job Search Behavior Performance-Approach Goal Orientation, JSBPAvGO = Job Search Behavior Performance-Avoidance Goal Orientation, JSBMApGO = Job Search Behavior Mastery-Approach Goal Orientation, JSBMAvGO = Job Search Behavior Mastery-Avoidance Goal Orientation

The inclusion of the eight goal orientations provided a more thorough explanation of the job search process, thus accounting for a greater portion of the explained variance in the

model. This resulted in all the paths in the base model being statistically significant and in the predicted direction.

As demonstrated above in Table 9, the direct effects of the eight goal orientations on the two self-efficacies provided additional interesting results. The relationship between employment performance-approach goal orientation and employment self-efficacy was significant. The relationship between employment performance-avoidance goal orientation and employment self-efficacy was very close to significance ($p = 0.069$). The other two employment goal orientations were not statistically significant. The analysis for the direct effect of the four job search behavior goal orientations on job search behavior self-efficacy produced the opposite results. Job search behavior mastery-approach goal orientation and job search behavior mastery-avoidance goal orientation relationships with job search behavior self-efficacy were both statistically significant. The other two job search behavior goal orientations were not statistically significant predictors of job search behavior self-efficacy. This pattern of results is consistent with my theorizing at the between-person level.

The hypotheses predicted that the employment performance goal orientations (approach and avoidance) would have a significant effect on employment self-efficacy because of the closer alignment of the performance goal orientations to the primary goal of employment. Conversely, the hypotheses predicted that the job search behavior mastery goal orientations (approach and avoidance) would have a significant relationship with the process goals formed to help achieve the primary goals, again because the mastery goal orientations are more closely aligned with the process goals. The study found these relationships as direct effects on the two self-efficacies, but not as moderators. This indicates that at the within-person level, the impact of job search goal orientations on employment self-efficacy and job

search behavior self-efficacy are not dependent upon the job seeker's perceived job search progress.

These results support the application of goal hierarchy to job search goal orientations. By separating goal orientations into goal orientations for the primary goal of employment and into the support goals of job search behavior, the influence of individuals' different goal orientations becomes apparent. I have demonstrated that the application of goal hierarchy to job search goal orientation is a valuable analytic tool in the evaluation of the job search process.

My findings may have broader applications as well. When using goal orientations as explanatory variables, it may be important to determine whether the examination relates to individuals' primary goals or to their support goals adopted to help achieve the primary goals. My study supports the analysis that performance goal orientations (approach and avoidance) will be relevant to the end goals, and the mastery goal orientations (approach and avoidance) will be relevant to the means goals.

Another notable finding is the support for including mastery-avoidance goal orientation in goal orientation research. The meta-analysis by Payne et al. (2007) does not include mastery-avoidance goal orientation because of the limited number of studies that had included it. In the article on goal orientation theory by DeShon and Gillespie (2005), the authors chose not to include mastery-avoidance goal orientation in their model of goal orientations because the authors believed it had limited applications. However, mastery-avoidance goal orientation has been used in some more recent articles (Noordzij, van Hooft, van Mierlo, van Dam & Born, 2013; Yeo, Loft, Xiao, & Kiewitz, 2009), and this study provides support for the inclusion of mastery-avoidance goal orientation in job search goal

orientation research. If job search behavior mastery-avoidance goal orientation had not been included in this study, the role of the avoidance characteristic in job search behavior would have been missed because job search behavior performance-avoidance goal orientation was not statistically significant. The statistical significance of job search behavior mastery-avoidance goal orientation and the lack of statistical significance of job search behavior performance-avoidance goal orientation provides support for the validity of goal hierarchy in job search goal orientations.

Another notable finding in my study was the unusual impact of employment performance-avoidance goal orientation. The Payne et al. (2007) meta-analysis finds performance-avoidance goal orientation to have a negative effect on specific self-efficacy. I also obtained a negative relationship between the employment performance-avoidance goal orientation and employment self-efficacy. As Liu et al. (2014) find and this study confirmed, employment self-efficacy is negatively related to job search behavior/job search effort. These relationships lead to employment performance-avoidance goal orientation having a positive impact on job search effort. This is an interesting result for a performance-avoidance goal orientation.

Limitations

A limitation in the study was the lack of constructive replication of the Liu et al. (2014) model. It is important to note that the initial model that was tested did not include internal attribution, which was included in the Liu et al. (2014) model. Constructive replication of the Liu et al. (2014) model was obtained when the job search goal orientations were included in the analysis.

Another limitation is the extraordinarily unusual worldwide situation during which the survey was conducted. The economies of the world were experiencing tremendous influence from the Covid pandemic. The surveys were conducted shortly after vaccinations had begun and economies started to improve in both the United States and the United Kingdom. I have no evidence or indication that this event is any different from past recessions and the process of job search. However, the pandemic must be recognized as a unique event within the economy.

Implications

Liu et al. (2014) demonstrate that goal hierarchy is applicable to job search self-efficacies. This study successfully extends the application of goal hierarchy to job search goal orientations. Future studies involving job search goal orientations should incorporate goal hierarchy in their theorizing, data acquisition, and analysis.

My study results have practical implications as well. A job seeker's job search intensity is identified as an important component of a successful job search effort (Wanberg, 2012). In my study, job search intensity is reflected in the outcome variable of job search effort. I found that job seekers' goal orientations will have either a positive effect or a negative effect upon their self-efficacy, which impacts their job search effort. Professionals in job search assistance should consider implementing goal orientation testing with their job seeking clients. This will enable job search assistance professionals to better advise their clients on their job search activities.

Future Research

In this dissertation, I provide evidence of the presence of goal hierarchy in job search goal orientations. The basis for the goal hierarchy of the goal orientations was postulated to

be related to the focus of different goal orientations. A job seeker's performance goal orientation (approach or avoidance) leads to a focus on achieving the primary goal of the job search process because it is the purpose of the job search process. A job seeker's mastery goal orientation (approach or avoidance) leads to the recognition that his/her primary goal achievements will occur from their successful job search activities, the subgoals of the goal hierarchy. Thus, the different goal orientations lead to a different focus of the goals in the goal hierarchy. This rationale should be tested in other goal hierarchy situations beyond job search.

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Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: 01/21/2021
Application Number: IRB-21-26
Proposal Title: An Examination Of The Role of Goal Orientation In The Relationship
                               Between Perceived Job Search Progress And Job Search Self-
                               Efficacies

Principal Investigator: Ed Mccabe
Co-Investigator(s):
Faculty Adviser: Bryan Edwards
Project Coordinator:
Research Assistant(s):   Elise Yu

Processed as: Exempt
Exempt Category:

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in 45CFR46.

This study meets criteria in the Revised Common Rule, as well as, one or more of the circumstances for which <u>continuing review is not required.</u> As Principal Investigator of this research, you will be required to submit a status report to the IRB triennially.

The final versions of any recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are available for download from IRBManager. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:
1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be approved by the IRB. Protocol modifications requiring approval may include changes to the title, PI, adviser, other research personnel, funding status or sponsor, subject population composition or size, recruitment, inclusion/exclusion criteria, research site, research procedures and consent/assent process or forms.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any unanticipated and/or adverse events to the IRB Office promptly.
4. Notify the IRB office when your research project is complete or when you are no longer affiliated with Oklahoma State University.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact the IRB Office at 405-744-3377 or irb@okstate.edu.

Sincerely,
Oklahoma State University IRB

VITA

Edward T. McCabe

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Dissertation: AN EXAMINATION OF THE ROLE OF GOAL ORIENTATION IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED JOB SEARCH PROGRESS AND JOB SEARCH SELF-EFFICACIES

Major Field: Business Administration, Executive Research

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Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Business Administration with a Concentration in Executive Research at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in December, 2021.

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Experience:

McCabe Energy Co., President and Owner, 1992 – Present

Taurus Minerals, Inc., Operations Manager, 1980 – 2012