



A Multi-Method Exploration of How Work Contributes to Well-Being

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From Health to Well-Being



Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the **absence of disease** or infirmity.

--World Health Organization, 1946



Health-related quality of life has generally focused on **deficits in functioning** and been linked to patient outcomes (morbidity and mortality).



Healthy Days Core Module (CDC HRQOL– 4)

1. Would you say that in general your health is excellent, very good, good, fair or poor?
2. Now thinking about your physical health, which includes physical illness and injury, for how many days during the past 30 days **was your physical health not good?**
3. Now thinking about your mental health, which includes stress, depression, and problems with emotions, for how many days during the past 30 days **was your mental health not good?**
4. During the past 30 days, for about how many days did **poor physical or mental health** keep you from doing your usual activities, such as self-care, work, or recreation?

EQ-5D-5L (UK English sample version)

MOBILITY

I have no problems in walking about

I have slight problems in walking about

I have moderate problems in walking about

I have severe problems in walking about

I am unable to walk about

PAIN / DISCOMFORT

I have no pain or discomfort

I have slight pain or discomfort

I have moderate pain or discomfort

I have severe pain or discomfort

I have extreme pain or discomfort



Positive Psychology

Cantrell: Life Satisfaction Ladder

Diener: Life Satisfaction and Flourishing

Seligman: PERMA Framework

Positive emotions – feeling good

Engagement – being completely absorbed in activities

Relationships – being authentically connected to others

Meaning – purposeful existence

Achievement – a sense of accomplishment and success

Ryff: well-being composed of: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, self-acceptance



Our Starting Place

- Not assume that treating/managing/curing/preventing illness or injury is the same as fostering well-being
- Use a measurement technique that allows for:
 - The mind and body to be interconnected
 - The inclusion of positive assets as well as problems or infirmities
 - Focus on “whole lives” as experienced
- Pluralism--- more than one way to be well and live a good life

A Narrative Approach

- Fundamental to narrative inquiry is the notion that people understand and give meaning to their lives through stories.
- These stories are “especially translucent windows into cultural and social meanings” (Patton, 2002)
- Therefore narrative inquiry is very well-suited to creating an understanding of well-being that is valid across cultures and for people who have had very different life experiences.

Andrews M, Squire C, Tamboukou M, eds. (2013) *Doing Narrative Research, 2nd edition*. London: Sage.

Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

First I would like to ask you about WELL-BEING.

So to start, I'd like to ask you to consider your adult life--- from the age of 18 onward. Please think of a time in your adult life when you were experiencing a particularly high level of well-being/particularly low level of well-being.

Please tell me about the time that you are thinking about.

Prompts IF NEEDED:

1. What were you feeling during that time?
2. What was going on in your life?
3. Tell me more about when this was?



Well-Being: Constituent Domains



Three Measures of Well-Being

WELL for Life
Scale

76 items

- Faceted measure of all 10 domains
- To be used by all WELL sites
- Allows for strong inferences about relevance of different domains
- Provides reliable domain subscales

Brief WELL for Life
Scale

20 items

- Faceted measure of all 10 domains
- To be incorporated into existing cohorts/studies

Global Well-Being
Item

1 item

- Overall subjective assessment with some priming for comprehensive construct

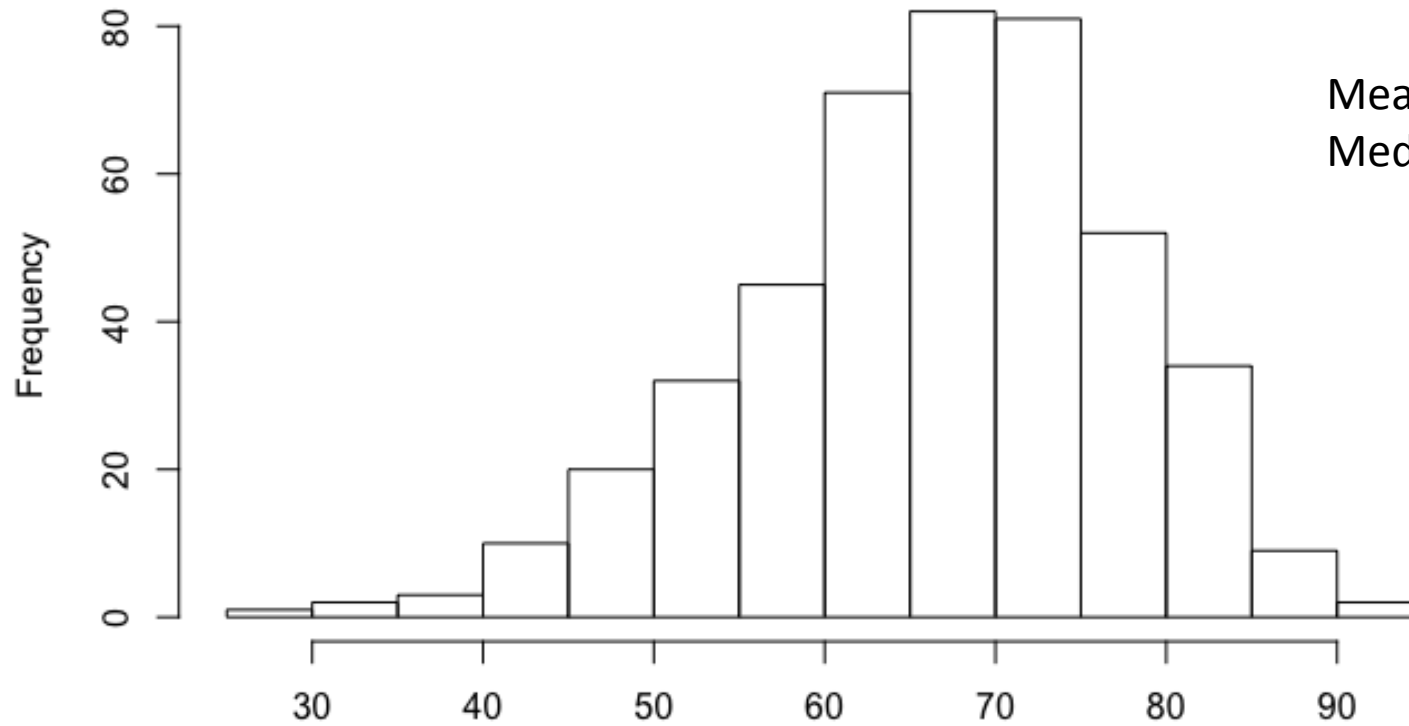
Well-Being Score (Composed of 10 Domains)

Potential Range: 0-100

Each domain is scored 0-10.

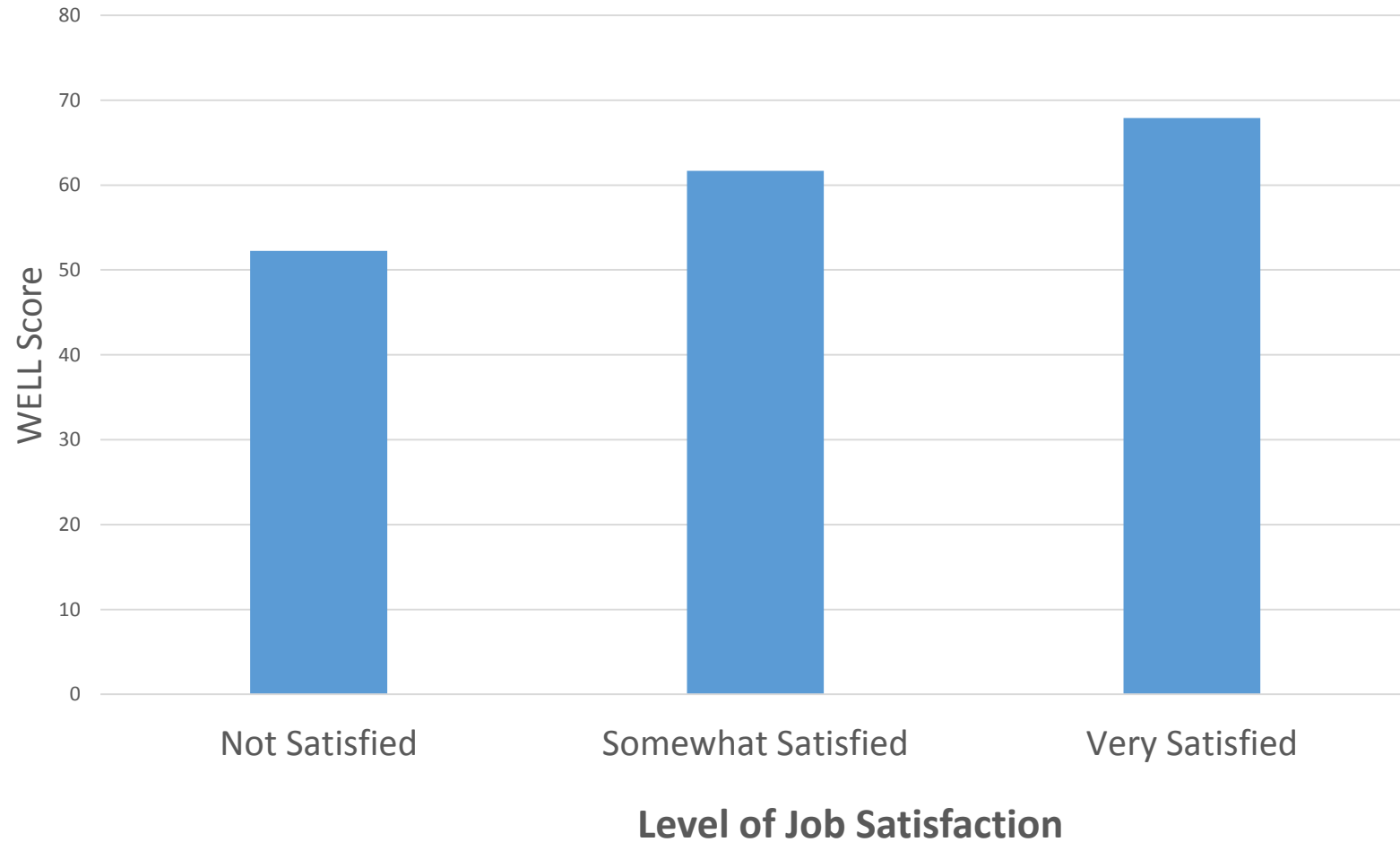
Mean= 66.36

Median=67.08

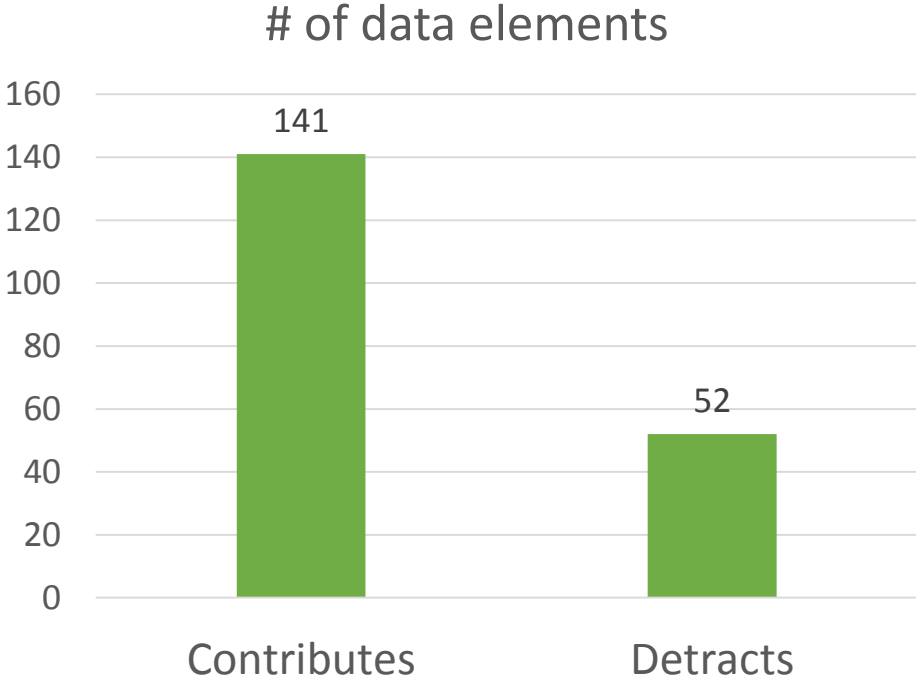
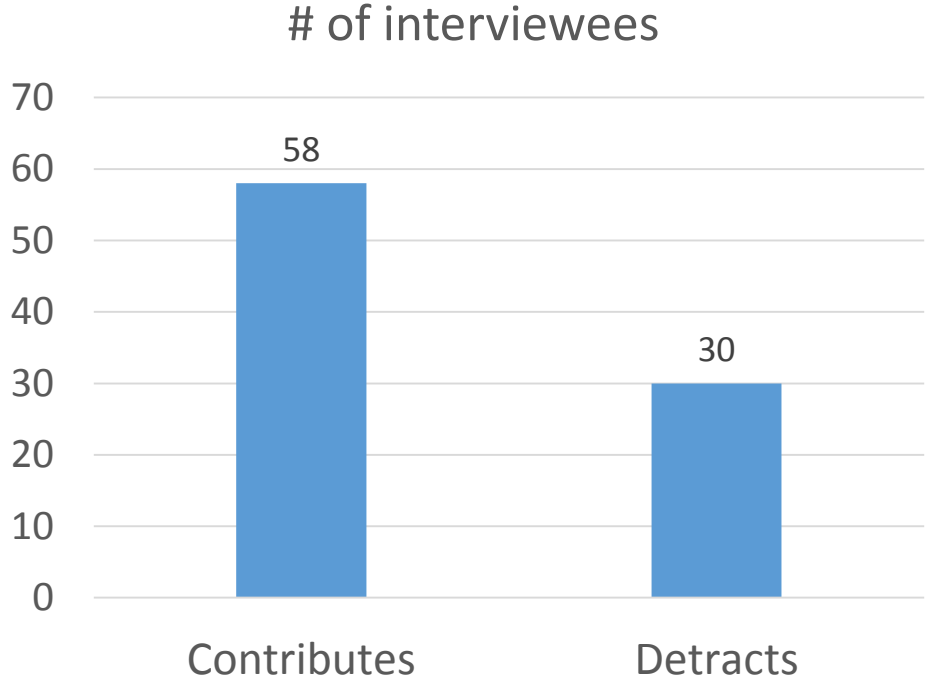


For a 50 year old woman with a bachelor's college degree

WELL Score by Level of Job Satisfaction (n=497)



Work Contributes More than it Detracts?



Ways that Work Detracts from Well-Being

Low pay	Time urgency
Job insecurity	Difficult work relationships
Role conflict	Heavy lifting/hard work
Lack of fulfillment	Long commutes
Stressful work	Emotional labor

How Work Contributes to Well-Being

Money

“I am starting to make money, that’s a positive thing for me”

“earning a decent wage”

“supporting my family”

Lifestyle Opportunities

“company outings”

“pelota courts”

“[worksite health promotion program] is an oasis for me”

“[worksite health promotion program] is a lifeline”



How Work Contributes to Well-Being

Social Interaction

Working together

- “Enjoyed working with the people”
- “highly collaborative”
- “...everyone’s on top of their game, so I really like that. Everyone’s open to new ideas. No one’s got an ego. Everyone just strives to be their best, and I really like that. I like working with people who think like that.”

Serving others

“I would go into this classroom and everyday I would say to myself that when I left that classroom– I was teaching ESL to adults– I would feel better than when I came”

Source of Connection

“gives me a role to play and through that, people get to know me.”

Meet new/different people

- “allows me to be somewhere with people who are doing interesting things. That means a lot to me.”
- “met a lot of celebrities”



How Work Contributes to Well-Being

Social Interaction

Serving others

- **Sense of Purpose:** “I would go into this classroom and everyday I would say to myself that when I left that classroom– I was teaching ESL to adults– I would feel better than when I came”
- **Source of joy:** “my sense of joy is very tied to the experience of my students. And so when they are going through tough times, I’m going through tough times. When they are doing great, I’m doing great...it is a very special sort of relationship”



How Work Contributes to Well-Being

Sense of agency/accomplishment/mastery

- “bringing my A game to business...trying to do a really good job”
- “I knew exactly what I needed to do, and that I could do it”
- “achieving something, achieving a goal. There can be a sense, like wow, I did it. And for a while you sort of bask in that for a little bit.”
- “my job built up my confidence again”
- “actually doing something in life...gaining a sense of control”
- [my job made me] so lively from the inside of me...I was just screaming!”



How Work Contributes to Well-Being

Learning skills

- Gaining new skills
- Using new skills
- Building on strengths

Learning about yourself

“I was able to develop my view of life, partly based on my experience for a telephone company.”

“[work can] build your personality”

How Work Contributes to Well-Being

Recognition

- “being recognized on a professional basis”
- “the customer called me in the afternoon and gushed for half an hour about how much he liked what we did. That just made me feel good all weekend, and I saved that recording. I usually don’t save my telephone messages, but I saved that one so I can play it back for the guys that I work with. I played it a couple of times and it’s just nice.

“Doing what I do best”: The association between skill utilization and employee health with healthy behavior as a mediator

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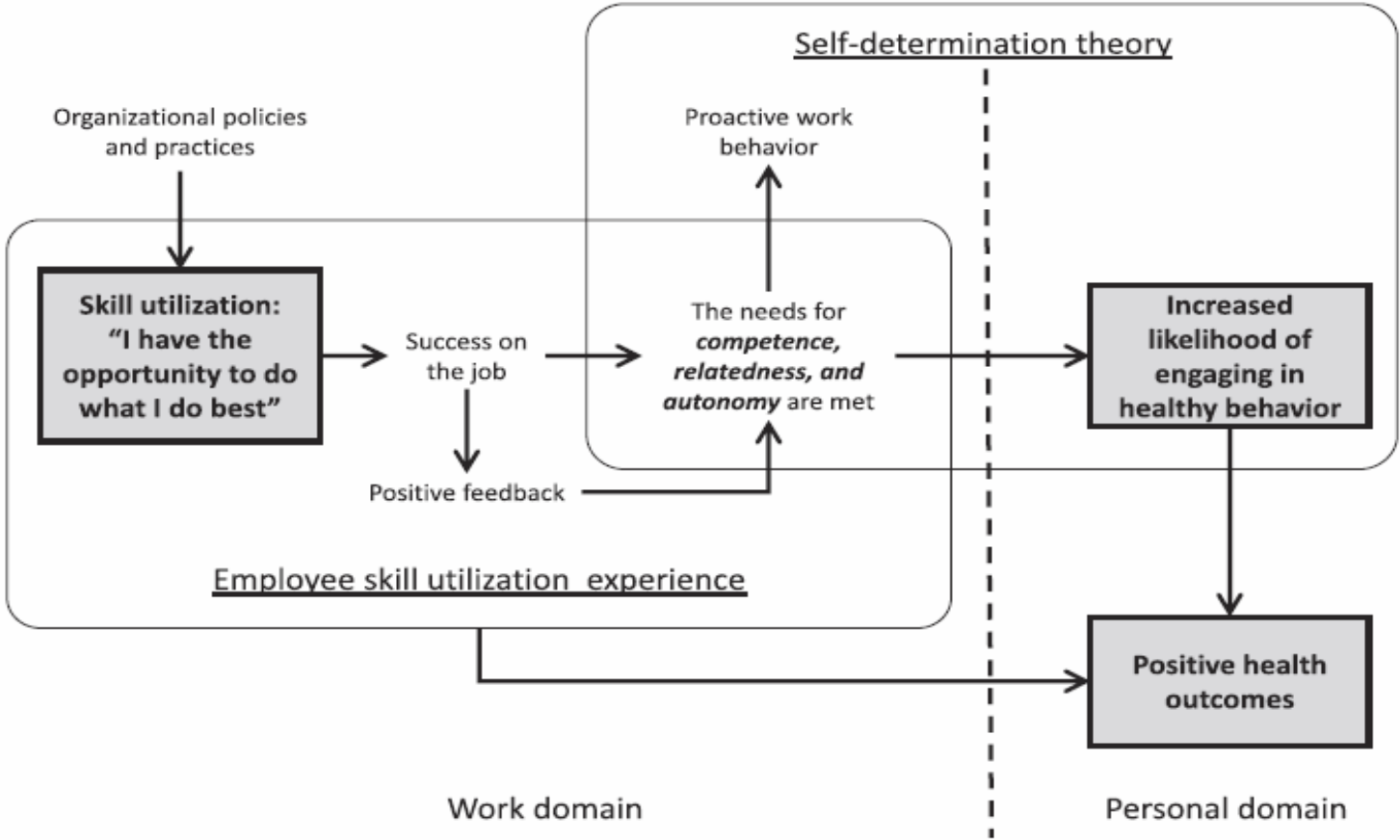


Fig. 1. A conceptual framework for direct and indirect effects of skill utilization on health.