

# Job Satisfaction and Personality

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# Introduction

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- „Job satisfaction has been one of the most intensively studied subjects in the field of industrial and organizational psychology. Literally thousands of books and articles have been written on it.“ (Locke, 1984)
- Relationship between job satisfaction and
  - the job itself (e.g. autonomy, variety)
  - environmental factors (e.g. pay, benefits, co-workers, supervisors)
  - individual differences (e.g. sex, age, race, cultural background)
- In recent economic studies psychological contracts are used as explanatory variables (for a summary, Borghans et. al, 2008)

# Review of the Literature

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- Since the last 20 years there has been carried out several studies on the relationship between job satisfaction and
  - negative and positive affectivity (Watson et. al, 1988)
  - internal and external locus of control (Rotter, 1966)
  - Big Five (i.e. neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness; Costa & McCrae, 1992)
  - core self-evaluations (Judge et. al, 1998)

# Review of the Literature: Affectivity

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- negative affectivity:
  - lowers the threshold to experience negative emotions
  - relationship with job satisfaction:  $-.33$  (Connolly and Visweswaran, 2000)
- positive affectivity:
  - increases the likelihood to experience positive emotions
  - relationship with job satisfaction:  $.49$  (Connolly and Visweswaran, 2000)

# Review of the Literature: Locus of Control

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- How much control does someone have over the events in his or her life.
- internal locus of control:
  - results are based on own efforts: .32 (Judge and Bono, 2001)
- external locus of control:
  - events are beyond his or her control and attributed to fate, destiny, or luck

# Review of the Literature: Big Five

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- Five broad personality dimensions (Judge et. al, 2002):
  - neuroticism (emotional stability):  $-.29$
  - extraversion:  $.25$
  - *conscientiousness*:  $.26$
  - *agreeableness*:  $.17$
  - openness (to experience)

# Review of the Literature: Core self-evaluations

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- individual's conclusion about him- or herself
- Model of Judge et. al (1998); (Judge and Bono, 2001):
  - self-esteem (related to positive affectivity): .26
  - self-efficacy: .45
  - internal locus of control: .32
  - low neuroticism (related to negative affectivity): -.24



# Data

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- German Socio-Economic Panel Study (SOEP): Data from 2005 and 2006 (balanced)
- Units of investigation: employees in the private and public sector 18 years and older
- Job satisfaction: 1 item
- Personality Traits:
  - Big Five (2005) - 15 items, 5 scales
  - general risk propensity (2006) - 1 item
  - (internal) locus of control (2005) - 5 items
  - reciprocity (2005) - 6 items, 2 scales
- Further explaining variables: work environment, demographic variables, life circumstances

# Data: Job Satisfaction

## Your current life situation

### 1. How satisfied are you today with the following areas of your life?

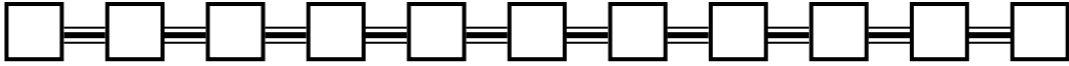
☞ Please answer by using the following scale:  
**0** means "**totally unhappy**",  
**10** means "**totally happy**".

How satisfied are you with . . .

*totally  
unhappy*

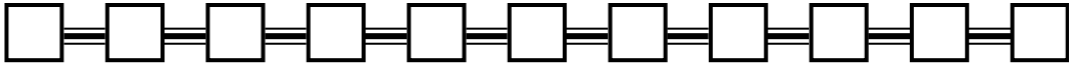
*totally  
happy*

– your health?



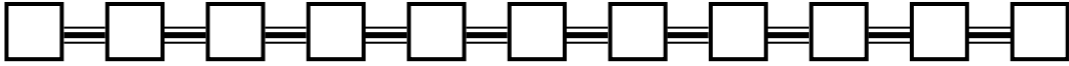
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

*(if employed)*  
– your job?



0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

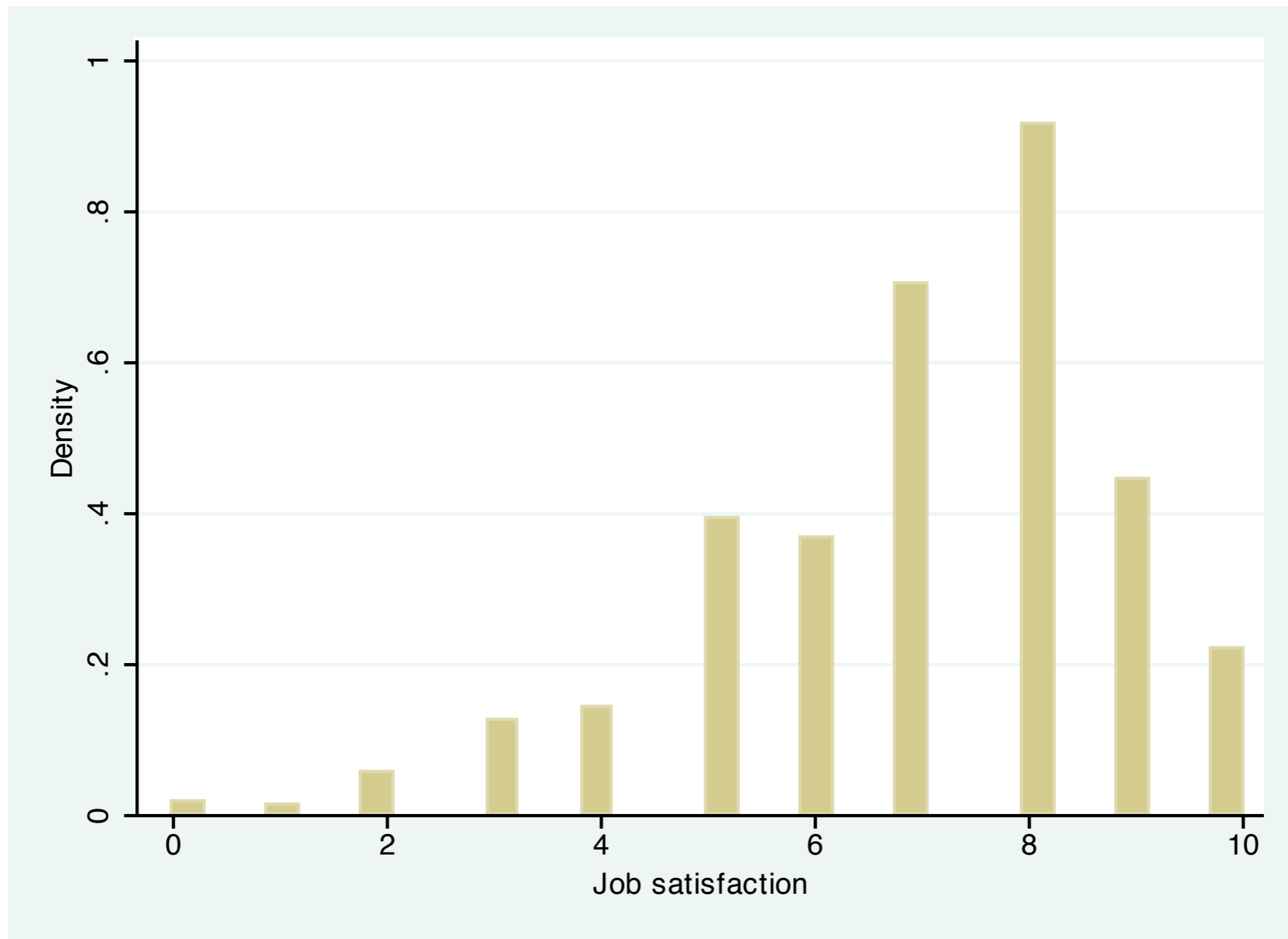
*(if working in household)*  
– your housework?



0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



# Data: Job Satisfaction





# Results: Multivariate - OLS

	all		1. quartil		4. quartil	
	personality	with control variables	personality	with control variables	personality	with control variables
<b>personality</b>						
conscientiousness	0,05 ***	0,06 ***	-0,003	0,004	0,13 ***	0,11 ***
extraversion	0,04 *	0,008	-0,05	-0,05 *	0,06	0,07
openness to experience	0,05 ***	0,04 **	-0,004	0,01	0,04	0,06
neuroticism	-0,14 ***	-0,05 ***	-0,10 ***	-0,06 *	0,04	0,04
agreeableness	0,05 **	0,02	-0,006	-0,02	0,07	0,06
general risk propensity	0,06 ***	0,03 **	0,06 *	0,06 *	-0,06	-0,07 *
external locus of control	0,05 **	0,07 ***	0,06 *	0,05 *	0,03	0,02
negative reciprocity	-0,03 **	-0,02	0,007	-0,009	-0,09 **	-0,08 *
positive reciprocity	0,04 **	0,05 ***	0,04	0,06 *	0,06	0,07
<b>working conditions</b>						
factor negative job burden		-0,19 ***		-0,13 ***		-0,03
factor negative job reconition		-0,26 ***		-0,23 ***		-0,08 *
autonomy		0,10 ***		-0,01		0,07
<b>job parameters</b>						
limited (ref. tenure)		0,06 ***		0,04		0,08 *
worried about (economic situation and job)		0,16 ***		0,04		-0,06
chances to get an equal job		0,04 ***		-0,0001		-0,06
duration of education		-0,06 ***		-0,03		-0,09
changed job in 2004		-0,002		-0,001		-0,05
changed job in 2005		-0,005		-0,11 ***		0,03
log(netto income)		0,08 ***		0,03		0,008
N	3061		1003		600	
Adj. R2	0,0463	0,2518	0,0133	0,1075	0,0336	0,0453

\* significant at 10%; \*\* significant at 5%; \*\*\* significant at 1%  
controlled for futher variables

Source: SOEP, all employees in the public and private sector in 2006, own calculations

# Summary & Discussion

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- What we already knew:  
Working conditions have the strongest influence on job satisfaction
- personality affect job satisfaction:
  - conscientiousness, *openness to experience*, neuroticism (not: *extraversion*, *agreeableness*), general risk propensity, external locus of control, positive reciprocity
- Conscientiousness affect those, who are very satisfied with their job:  
Are they more persistent?



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Thank you!

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