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INTERESTS AND DECENT WORK'S ACCOUNT OF WELL-BEING AND JOB PERFORMANCE IN A LOWER SOCIAL CLASS SAMPLE

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by

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ABSTRACT

There is a need for more accurate information regarding the work-related experiences of individuals from lower social class backgrounds. The present study seeks to evaluate the degree to which important career-related variables (e.g., interest congruence, decent work) account for differences in subjective well-being (SWB) and job performance (e.g., occupational citizenship behavior [OCB], task performance) for a sample of adults from lower social class backgrounds. A novel approach to evaluating the objective indicators of social class for individual study participants was implemented to collect a sample of 365 participants, 105 of which were included in analysis. A path analysis was conducted to evaluate study hypotheses. Results indicated that decent work accounted for a significant amount of the variance in SWB, but not for task performance or OCB. Interest congruence did not account for a significant amount of the variance in any outcome variables. Practical implications of the results, study limitations, and next steps for research are discussed.

Keywords: Interest congruence, decent work, subjective well-being, job performance, path analysis

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my longsuffering companion Brittany. She has been with me through all the long hours spent designing and carrying out this project. She provided me the realistic perspectives and emotional support I needed to complete my dissertation during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Without her, this whole process would have been nigh unbearable. Thank you.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
DHOC	Dictionary of Holland's Occupational Codes
DWS	Decent Work Scale
OCB	Organizational Citizenship Behavior
OCB-C	Organizational Citizenship Behavior – Checklist
OIP-SF	O*NET Interest Profiler – Short Form
PSI	Pandemic Stress Index
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SSS	Subjective Social Status
SWB	Subjective Well-Being
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index

CHAPTER I - REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The objective of career practitioners is primarily to promote work that results in the general well-being of their clients. Vocational researchers have long sought to determine what elements are most important in addressing to help individuals seeking career counseling obtain work that is both satisfying and secure. While there are numerous career-related factors influencing work, one of the most widespread is interest congruence. Holland (1997) put forth interest congruence, or the fit between a person's personality and job, as a key factor in determining a variety of career-related outcomes including job performance and subjective well-being. Ryan, Tracey, and Rounds (1996) pointed out that cultural variables are vital in considering how traditional career-related variables such as interest congruence differ for individual clients. Social class is one variable which may have a significant impact on an individual's work-related experiences. Decent work has been promoted as particularly relevant for individuals experiencing high levels of marginalization and economic constraints (Duffy et al., 2016). To date, interest congruence and decent work have not been well-studied together. Yet, both are considered variables associated with more satisfying work and improved job performance.

The present study seeks to determine if interest congruence, decent work, or a combination of the two best explain differences in subjective well-being (SWB) and job performance (e.g., organizational citizenship behavior [OCB], task performance). To address Ryan and colleagues' (1996) point about the impact of cultural variables in career development, the present research is exploring the impact of interest congruence and decent work on SWB, OCB, and task performance in a sample of adults from a lower

social class background. This research attempts to better understand what the most critical focal points of working adult career development assistance may be when those adults are from lower social class backgrounds. Ultimately, results will clarify what areas may be most helpful for career practitioners to emphasize for their clients who come from lower social class backgrounds.

Social Class: Brief History, Definition, and Findings

Social class is one of the most studied variables in the social sciences. Despite its long history of study, it continues to be a somewhat nebulous concept to measure. Social class has historically been evaluated using exclusively objective indicators of an individual's economic standing (Diemer, et al., 2013). Composite measures of social class that include occupational prestige ratings were also commonly used (Diemer, et al., 2013). In 2004, Heppner and Scott (2004) pointed out that little research has been done to actually evaluate social class as a determining factor in psychological outcomes. They suggested incorporating objective and subjective elements of class in research studies as more than just a contextual variable (Heppner & Scott, 2004). Liu and Ali (2005) went on to connect social class and classism to vocational theory and practice, emphasizing that assumptions of the importance of upward mobility and remnants of the protestant work ethic perpetuate classist attitudes in society. The addition to including the social context to the evaluation of social class was a vital step forward in the conceptualization of social class in the context of vocational psychology (Diemer & Ali, 2009). The operationalization of social class was further clarified by Diemer and colleagues (2013) who emphasized the combination of objective indicators and subjective perceptions of one's on standing in society. They emphasize that objective indicators such as

occupational prestige, educational attainment, and income should be considered for each individual, as each person exists in a unique economic environment (Diemer et al., 2013). However, these objective indicators are incomplete without consideration of where someone considers themselves to stand in society subjectively (Heppner & Scott, 2004; Liu & Ali, 2005; Diemer, et al., 2009; Diemer, et al., 2013). The aforementioned advances in the conceptualization of social class laid the groundwork for more effectively integrating social class into psychological research.

Social class has been examined in connection with a large number of variables, including health-related outcomes (Adler et al., 2000; Adler et al., 2008; Muntaner et al., 2010) and mental health counseling (Choi & Miller, 2018). Social class also has been studied extensively in the vocational psychology literature. This has been performed primarily with students in high school, undergraduate, and graduate programs and found that social class significantly impacts career decision-making (Muzika et al., 2019), career-related self-efficacy and outcome expectations (Ali et al., 2005; Harlow & Bowman, 2016; Hsieh & Huang, 2014; Metheny & McWhirter, 2013; Thompson & Subich, 2006), work volition and career adaptability (Autin, et al., 2017), and career aspirations (Boejeloo, et al., 2014). Social class also has been shown to have a significant impact on the way individuals from lower social class backgrounds view work, education, and retirement (Brown, et al., 1996; Chaves, et al., 2004; Greenlagh, et al., 2004; Kim & Oh, 2013). Numerous studies support the finding that individuals who come from more economically marginalized communities consistently elect to pursue educational and work-related opportunities that are stereotypically considered to be less prestigious and that perpetuate the economic difficulties they have already faced (Cooter

et al., 2004; Garriott, et al., 2013; Goldstein, 1974; Goyette, 2008; Khallad, 2000; Robb, et al., 2007; Segal et al., 2001; Southgate, et al., 2015; Vilhjalmsdottir & Arnkelsson, 2013; Warnath, 1956; Werts, 1966). Additionally, studies have consistently shown that social class significantly impacts student experiences in higher levels of education (Jury, et al., 2017; Walpole, 2003; Mastekaasa, 2006; Mathers & Parry, 2009; Parker et al., 2012; Spar, et al., 1993). Despite the significant advancements in social class research in vocational psychology, there is much more to be done. The present study used objective indicators of social class to collect a sample of individuals who likely experience higher levels of economic marginalization. Subjective social status was evaluated as a demographic descriptor for how participants perceived themselves. Both objective and subjective indicators of social class were used as descriptors for the study sample.

Subjective Well-being

One variable that is increasingly vital to explore in relation to social class is subjective well-being (SWB). Career-related factors that impact SWB are often emphasized in the vocational psychology literature (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Duffy et al, 2016; Holland, 1997). While there are a wide range of opinions regarding the appropriate conceptualization of SWB, one predominant view is the hedonic perspective. This perspective emphasizes the combination of cognitive and affective elements that reflect a general sense of well-being (Diener, 1984; Diener et al, 2002). The cognitive element consists of a perception of general life satisfaction while the emotional experience of well-being consists of the presence of positive affect rather than negative affect (Diener, 1984). It is of note that this conceptualization of SWB is widely considered to reflect people's perception of their own well-being rather than relying on external indicators of

affluence or power (Diener, 1984; Fouchè & Martindale, 2011; Harris & Rottinghaus, 2017). The promotion of SWB may be considered one core purpose of helping professionals. Thus, the examination of what accurately accounts for the variability in SWB may provide an important piece of information for career practitioners.

There has been some research evaluating the development of SWB for people from lower social class backgrounds or backgrounds. Konstam and colleagues (2015) found that career adaptability is significantly associated with higher levels of SWB for unemployed adults. Additionally, Pisarik and Shoffner (2009) demonstrated that individuals from lower socioeconomic positions as defined by the Nakao and Treas (1992) Socioeconomic Index have lower levels of life satisfaction with greater discrepancies in work-related aspirations and their actual job responsibilities. One study found that levels of perceived job insecurity significantly impacted the SWB of unemployed adults, although it should be noted this study did not evaluate social class itself (Maggiori et al, 2013). Studies also show that unemployment and economic stress have a significant, detrimental effect on SWB (Mistry et al, 2009; Paul & Moser, 2009). Overall, it is clear that social class and unemployment have a significant impact on SWB. The current study integrates subjective well-being by evaluating how decent work and interest congruence may be used to account for SWB in a sample of participants likely experiencing economic marginalization.

Job Performance

Job performance is another variable that has long been an important consideration for employers and career practitioners. While there are several elements included in job performance, one predominant conceptualization emphasizes the combination of

organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and task performance (Williams & Anderson, 1991; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2002). OCB has been defined as an individual's voluntary workplace behavior, which promotes effective organizational functioning by contributing to a positive work environment (Organ, 1988; Organ 1990). For example, individuals exhibiting organizational citizenship may provide support to co-workers in need or volunteer for extra assignments. High OCB can result in improved task performance (Henderson et al, 2019; Organ, 1988; Organ 1990). Task performance addresses a general ability to meet the requirements of whatever job someone currently holds (Viswesvaran & Ones, 2002). This could include tasks such as effectively operating welding equipment or a cash register. The combination of OCB and task performance may be important for career practitioners to address in order to ensure increased satisfaction and tenure at work.

Research shows that negative work environments including things such as role conflict and ambiguity result in overall lower levels of OCB, except in circumstances where workers are satisfied with their jobs (Eatough et al¸ 2011). Additionally, emotional intelligence (Miao et al, 2017), personality traits (Chiaburu et al, 2011), level of emotional strain (Chang et al,2007), and healthy, supportive leadership styles (Ilies et al; 2007; Nohe & Hertel, 2017) have also been found to effectively account for differences in OCB. Perhaps one of the most robust predictors of OCB is the fit between an individual's work-related values and organizational offerings that fall in line with those goals (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Stone et al., 2019).

Task performance has received a great deal of attention in the literature and has been the subject of several comprehensive meta-analyses (Stajkovic & Luthans, 2003;

Chiaburu et al, 2014; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Moscoso & Salgudo, 2004; Wang et al, 2019). Several variables have consistently been found to effectively predict task performance; including, healthy, supportive leadership styles; sufficient pay; effective feedback; social recognition; and occupational commitment (Stajkovic & Luthans, 2003; Chiaburu et al, 2014; Wang et al, 2019). Additionally, conflict between co-workers and dysfunctional personality styles have been shown to negatively impact team performance, team member satisfaction, and individual task performance (De Dreu & Weingart; 2003; Moscoso & Salgudo, 2004).

Considering the potential importance of promoting OCB and task performance for career clients, career practitioners may benefit from understanding how each differs for individuals from different backgrounds. Results from several meta-analyses suggest that OCB is relevant for both men and women from distinct cultural backgrounds, although it is more commonly viewed as essential for employment in collectivistic rather than individualistic cultures (Cetin et al, 2015; Jiao et al, 2013; Ng et al, 2016). Additionally, studies evaluating task performance have been performed with people from a variety of gender identities, cultures, and organizations (Stajkovic & Luthans, 2003; Chiaburu et al, 2014; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Moscoso & Salgudo, 2004; Wang et al, 2019). However, while some research has evaluated how social class impacts job performance in general (Henke, 1976; Kuncel et al, 2014), there is a lack of research explicitly examining how OCB and task performance differ as a function of social class. Thus, studies evaluating how people from lower social class backgrounds are needed to provide support for career services which promote both OCB and task performance for this population. The present study seeks to explore how two commonly considered career-

related variables, interest congruence and decent work, account for the variability in SWB, OCB, and task performance for a sample of participants who come from a lower social class background.

Interest Congruence

Holland's RIASEC theory postulates that career interests may be organized into six categories, each of which provide information on the tasks people are most interested in performing at work: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional (RIASEC; Holland, 1997). According to Holland, someone's career interests may be characterized as a combination of these categories (e.g. RIA, ISE) which reflects the constellation of tasks and activities that person is interested in performing at work (Holland, 1997). Occupations may also be characterized by a similar combination of RIASEC categories which reflects the values, interests, skills, and tasks emphasized in that occupation (Holland, 1997). These combinations of letters are referred to as a Holland code for the individual and an occupational code for the job. Holland's RIASEC theory suggests that the fit between someone's career interests and the opportunities to satisfy those interests at work has important implications for work-related outcomes such as occupational engagement, well-being, and job satisfaction (Holland, 1997). The similarity or match between Holland codes and occupational codes may be referred to as interest congruence.

There have been inconsistent results regarding the relationship between interest congruence and the predicted positive relationship with job satisfaction (Assouline & Meir, 1987; Nye et al, 2017; Spokane, 1985; Spokane et al, 2000; Tranberg et al, 1993). However, a more recent series of meta-analysis suggested that interest congruence is

likely related to job satisfaction when considering general career trajectories rather than specific jobs or when utilizing updated methods for measuring congruence (Hoff et al., 2020; Su, 2020; Wiegland et al., 2021; Xu 7 Li, 2020). While there are inconsistent results regarding the relationship between interest congruence and job satisfaction, recent literature is highly supportive of the relationship interest congruence has with SWB, OCB, and job performance (Hoff et al., 2021; Su, 2020). This is particularly evident when examining the relationship between interest congruence and job performance (Nye et al, 2017; Nye et al, 2012; Van Iddekinge et al, 2011). Nye and colleagues (2017) suggest that while interest congruence may not provide strong predictive power in terms of job satisfaction, it may be effective in determining certain elements of job performance. Findings from their meta-analysis indicated that interest congruence effectively accounted for differences in task performance, organizational citizenship behavior, persistence on the job, and training performance (Nye et al, 2017). Recent studies supported these findings in samples of entry-level enlisted military personnel and employed workers in China (Wee et al., 2020; Li, Flores, et al., 2021; Li, Yang, et al., 2021). Li and colleagues' (2021) studies described above indicate that a reevaluation of the value of interest congruence in career interventions may be an important next step in the literature.

While there has been difficulty finding consistent support for interest congruence and job satisfaction, interest congruence does seem to positively impact one's sense of more general life satisfaction or well-being. For example, Harris and Rottinghaus (2017) found that interest congruence accounted for a significant amount of the variance in SWB for the participants employed in the majority of occupations in their sample. Occupations

in their sample ranged from attorneys to elementary school teachers. Wille and colleagues (2014) found that, when individuals did not change their jobs significantly over time, interest congruence resulted in higher levels of life satisfaction (Wille et al, 2014). Conversely, significant job changes resulted in lower levels of life satisfaction (Wille et al, 2014). Overall, these findings provide support for Holland's (1997) RIASEC theory which emphasizes the utility of interest congruence in predicting SWB. While the studies outlined above support a relationship between interest congruence and SWB, more research is needed to confirm this relationship and understand the relationship in a sample of working adults from a lower social class background. The cited studies did not explicitly include evaluation of social class. Thus, additional research evaluating the relationship between interest congruence and SWB while explicitly describing the class-related demographics of the sample is warranted.

Much research has been performed evaluating the role interest congruence plays in the work-related functioning of men and women from distinct cultures, nationalities, and ethnicities (Fouad et al, 1997; Hirschi & Läge, 2007; Spokane et al, 1978; Tang, 2009; Subich, 2005). There is also significant evidence for the utility of interest congruence in a number of different regions and countries outside of the United States including: China, South Asia, Germany, Pakistan, Switzerland, and Canada (Kantamneni & Fouad, 2013; Hirschi & Läge, 2007; Hussain et al., 2021; Jaensch et al, 2016; Li, Flores, et al., 2021; Li, Yang, et al., 2021; Posthuma & Navran, 1970; Tang, 2009; Pozzebon et al, 2014). However, much of the research on interest congruence has focused on the career development of high school and college students (Jaensch et al, 2016; Hirschi & Läge, 2007; O'Brien et al, 1999; Pesch et al, 2018; Posthuma & Navran, 1970;

Pozzebon et al, 2014; Spokane et al, 1978; Tang, 2009; Wille et al, 2014). Overall, there is clear evidence to suggest that interest congruence impacts the lives of individuals from various occupations, diverse backgrounds, and many countries. However, the differential efficacy of Holland's theory in predicting job performance outcomes and SWB has not been thoroughly examined in individuals from lower social class backgrounds. This was evident in meta-analyses such one completed by Guan and colleagues (2021) wherein they mentioned only one article explicitly addressing social class in 50 years of Person-Environment Fit research through the *Journal of Vocational Behavior* (Healy, 1973). Thus, there remains a large gap in the literature regarding the appropriate use of interest congruence in counseling individuals from those backgrounds.

Decent Work

Some vocational researchers propose that traditional approaches to career counseling which emphasize stereotypical career pathways and interest congruence may be less effective for individuals experiencing high levels of marginalization and economic constraints (Blustein et al, 2008). Alternatively, they suggest that career practitioners who emphasize decent work may be more effective in helping people from lower social class backgrounds (Blustein et al, 2008). Decent work has been defined as work which satisfies three basic needs: Survival needs, social connection needs, and self-determination needs (Blustein et al, 2008; Duffy et al, 2016). Researchers have suggested that by satisfying basic needs through decent work, an individual will ultimately experience greater work fulfillment and well-being (Blustein, 2008; Duffy et al, 2016). Research also demonstrates that individuals with higher levels of SWB also tend to perform better at work (Erdogan et al, 2012). Thus, decent work provides an additional

lens through which we may better understand the job performance and SWB of individuals from lower social classes. Ultimately, this has important implications for career practitioners working with this population by providing them an additional tool beyond interest congruence for helping their clients secure work that is both satisfying and sufficient for their needs.

Research on decent work has been carried out with a wide range of employed adults living in in the United States, Turkey, Italy, the United Kingdom, South Korea, Brazil, France, Portugal, China, West Africa, and India (Buyukgoze-Kavas & Autin, 2019; Chen et al., 2020; Di Fabio & Kenny, 2019; Dodd et al., 2019; Ferreira et al., 2019; Kashyap et al., 2021; Ma et al., 2020; Masdonati et al., 2019; Nam & Ki, 2019; Ribeiro et al., 2019; Rossier & Ouedraogo. 2021; Vignoli et al., 2020; Wei et al., 2021). This has resulted in an expanding literature on the antecedents of decent work, including studies that both qualitatively and quantitatively find that economic constraints and social class impact the perceived ability to secure decent work (Douglass et al, 2017; Duffy et al, 2018; Kozan et al, 2019; Tokar & Kaut, 2018; Kossen & McIlveen, 2018; Kozan et al, 2019). Conversely, Ferreira and colleagues (2019) did not find that decent work varied as a function of social class. This may have been due to the authors only evaluating subjective social status. This potential limitation to the exploration of social class in decent work is fairly common as many studies on decent work only account for subjective social status (i.e., perceptions of social standing) or perceived economic marginalization across the lifetime. Additionally, Liu (2011) has pointed out that since individuals reside in their own economic cultures, reliance on subjective social status as a predictor is difficult because people are interpreting the question differently. For

example, people comparing themselves to others within their economic context may view themselves at falling in the center of the social class distribution despite falling at the low end of the economic spectrum in the general population. Thus, more research is needed that incorporates both a broader evaluation of social class criteria and an assessment of participants current experiences of economic marginalization is needed.

Additionally, there has been increased attention to the outcomes of securing decent work. Studies which have incorporated outcomes from decent work have found that it significantly impacts job and life satisfaction, work meaning, withdrawal intention, work engagement and commitment, health behavior, psychological health, academic engagement, and career exploration (Buyukgoze-Kavas & Autin, 2019; Chen et al., 2020; Di Fabio & Kenny, 2019; Dodd et al., 2019; Duffy et al., 2021; Ferereira et al., 2019; Huang et al., 2021; Kashyap et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2021; Kozan et al, 2019; Ma et al., 2020; Ma et al., 2021; Masdonati et al., 2019; Nam & Ki, 2019; Ribeiro et al., 2019; Vignoli et al., 2020; Wei et al., 2021). Studies that did not explicitly evaluate decent work indicated that meeting the three basic needs central to the concept of decent work (e.g., survival, relationship, and self-determination needs) has a significant impact on general well-being (Kim et al, 2017). Additionally, outcomes related to decent work such as increased work volition, self-determination, income security, needs satisfaction, work life balance, and supportive work environments have shown to be significantly associated with higher levels of SWB (Burke & McKeen, 1995; Buyukgoze-Kavas et al, 2015; Carvalho & Chambel, 2016; Diener et al, 2015; Heidemeier & Wiese, 2014; Kidd, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Tebbe et al, 2019). Researchers have called for further efforts to determine what outcomes may be expected from securing decent work (Tokar & Kaut,

2018). Outcome-focused research on decent work provides support for the idea that if someone from a lower social class background secures it, they will likely experience an increase in general well-being. Thus, decent work appears to be a potentially important avenue through which career practitioners may meet their underlying desire to help their low-income clients achieve a better life through SWB and job performance.

Study Purpose and Hypotheses

The present study sought to evaluate the differential explanatory power of interest congruence and decent work on subjective well-being (SWB), organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and task performance in a sample of adults from a lower social class background. These variables are frequently assessed in research aimed at helping clients secure more satisfying, meaningful, and successful work-lives (Duffy et al, 2016; Holland, 1997; Nye et al, 2017). Researchers have suggested that paths to securing decent work are a more important focus for individuals from lower social class backgrounds than traditional intervention methods that often involve exploring interest congruence (Blustein et al, 2008; Duffy et al, 2016). The present study addressed a gap in the literature by providing empirical evidence for important vocational intervention points and foci for this population, specifically as it relates to the role interest congruence and decent work play in accounting for differences in job performance and subjective well-being.

This study has important practical implications for career practitioners. The results will provide information regarding the most beneficial areas to focus on with clients from lower social class backgrounds. For example, if decent work is more relevant to SWB, OCB, and task performance for individuals from lower social class

backgrounds, then it may be more helpful to approach counseling from a perspective of securing decent work over maximizing interest congruence. Conversely, if interest congruence is more effective in accounting for differences in SWB, OCB, and task performance, career practitioners would do well to continue emphasizing it. Finally, should both interest congruence and decent work significantly account for differences in the outcome variables of the present study, career practitioners may consider using a combination of the two in their work with clients who come from lower social class backgrounds. The research questions and hypotheses of the present study are listed below.

Question 1: Does interest congruence account for a significant amount of the variance in subjective well-being, organizational citizenship behavior, and task performance?

Hypothesis 1: Interest congruence will significantly account for the variance in subjective well-being, organizational citizenship behavior, and task performance.

Question 2: Does decent work account for a significant amount of the variance in subjective well-being, organizational citizenship behavior, and task performance?

Hypothesis 2: Decent work will account for a significant amount of the variance in subjective well-being, organizational citizenship behavior, and task performance.

Question 3: Does decent work account for significantly more variance than interest congruence in subjective well-being, organizational citizenship behavior, and task performance?

Hypothesis 3: Decent work will not account for significantly more variance than interest congruence in subjective well-being, organizational citizenship behavior, and task performance.

CHAPTER II - METHODS

Participants and Procedures

The COVID-19 pandemic precluded the original plan to collect data in-person. However, relationships were formed with approximately 13 community partners (e.g., employment agency, faculty at community colleges, regional and national disability networks) who distributed the internet link to a secure data collection website to potential participants. Community partners were offered the opportunity to receive feedback regarding the results of the study and suggestions for incorporation, a free presentation on the partner's career or mental health-related topic of choice, and time for their clients to gain additional feedback from the Vocational Psychology Research Team. Additionally, the researcher followed recommendations made by Shatz (2016) for the effective recruitment using Reddit. More specifically, permission was requested from 13 subreddits likely to include people who were matched our desired demographic to post a secure link to the Qualtrics survey. Of those subreddits, only four granted permission to post the survey and, due to the limited number of eligible participants who completed the survey, data collection via Redditt only lasted approximately two months. All participants, regardless of where they were recruited from, were offered the opportunity to receive feedback regarding their results on the O*NET Interest Profile, the chance to win one of 15 $10.00 gift cards, or both.

From May 2020 to April 2021, a total of 365 participants took the survey. This data collection period was during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Participants who met the following criteria were included: 1) at least 18 years old, 2) currently employed or has been employed in the last six months, 3) income less than $50,000 per year, and 4) score

of two or more on the five-point social class screening form designed for this study and fully described in the Measurements section. Of the 365 participants who completed the survey, 154 received a score of two or more on the social class screening form indicating eligibility for inclusion in the sample. Forty-three participants were excluded for not providing sufficient responses on critical study measures. There were 11 participants who failed at least three of the four embedded validity items initiating additional validity check steps. None of the 11 who failed validity item completed the survey in significantly less time than other respondents. The variance for each participant's responses on study measures was calculated in excel and compared to the average variance across each participant's responses on study items. Six out of the 11 who failed three or more validity checks were excluded due their variance across items in one or more study measures being significantly more or less varied ($p<.05$) than the mean variance across participant item responses on each measure. The process of ensuring valid responses described above incorporated several elements suggested by Meade and Craig (2012). The removal of participants outlined above resulted in a total of 105 participants to be included in analysis which was sufficient for this study's analytic plan (Meyers et al., 2017).

Whereas many studies evaluating subjective social status produce samples that mostly identify as middle class or above (Kim et al., 2021; Rossier & Ouedraogo, 2021; Xu & Li., 2020), 60 percent of participants in this study identified as working or middle class, and only eight participants identified as coming from upper middle class or above. Additionally, 28 states were represented in our sample with participants reporting being employed in diverse occupations such as wastewater treatment plant and system operators, welding, soldering, and brazing workers, pharmacy aids, hairdressers, food

preparation workers, and drywall installers. Table 1 contains additional demographic characteristics of the sample.

Measurement

Social Class.

Researchers have suggested a combination of objective and subjective indicators is best to examine participant socioeconomic status (Ali et al, 2013; Diemer & Ali, 2009; Diemer et al, 2013; Diemer et al, 2010). While subjective indicators are helpful in exploring an individual's class-related experience, objective indicators present more measurable ways of evaluating participants' economic standing. For the present study, social class screening involved the evaluation of five of the most commonly used objective indicators of social class: Income, neighborhood disadvantage level, whether or not they received state or federal aid, education level, and occupational prestige ranking. Occupational prestige rankings were retrieved from Duncan's Socioeconomic Index which was recently updated to include modern perceptions of occupational prestige (DSEI; Duncan, 1961; Hout, Smith, & Marsden, 2014). Neighborhood disadvantage level was measured using the Neighborhood Atlas, an online tool that accounts for census-level and national data to compare a neighborhood's disadvantage level (Kind & Buckingham, 2019; University of Wisconsin School of Medicine Public Health, 2015). Neighborhood disadvantage levels found in the Neighborhood Atlas were derived from the Area Deprivation Index (ADI) which includes information on education, employment, housing-quality and poverty from Census data and the American Community Survey (Kind & Buckingham, 2019). It provides data on both state deciles

and national percentiles with higher values indicating a greater level of neighborhood disadvantage.

To address the common criticism of overly generalized composite measures of socioeconomic status while also allowing for comparisons across participants, an individualized social class score was calculated for each participant using the same scale. Participants were assigned zero, one-half, or one point per criterion for a total score range of zero to five. For example, if a participant indicated they completed high school as their highest level of education, they would receive one point for that answer. If a participant's neighborhood disadvantage level was equal to or greater than the sixth state decile and the 61st national percentile that constituted 1 point while those whose neighborhood disadvantage level was lower less than the sixth state decile and the 61st national percentile constituted zero points toward the total score. While the original proposal included a cut-off of three points for participation, difficulties associated with online data collection resulted in a lowered threshold of two points. This particular approach to individualized social class screening has not been previously employed. While information on subjective social status was collected, it was not used as one of the screening criteria.

While there is no clear standard for the evaluation of subjective social status, the MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status (Adler et al, 2000) is one of the measures most commonly utilized to evaluate subjective perceptions of social standing in social class research in psychology. The scale consists of presenting a picture of a ladder to participants with the following description: "Think of this ladder as representing where people stand in our society. At the top of the ladder are the people who are the best off,

those who have the most money, most education, and best jobs. At the bottom are the people who are the worst off, those who have the least money, least education, and worst jobs or no job." Participants were asked to indicate where they fall in comparison to other people in the United States. Participants selected one of the 10 available rungs on the ladder to represent their perceived social standing. The MacArthur Scale has been used to evaluate the relationship between subjective social status (SSS) and health outcomes (Adler et al, 2008; Operario et al, 2004), work volition and career adaptability (Autin et al, 2017), psychological and physical functioning (Adler et al, 2000), decent work measurement (Duffy et al, 2017), and economic constraints (Duffy et al, 2019). The scale has been shown to coincide closely with a wide variety of objective indicators of social class and to effectively predict a variety of work and health related outcomes (Adler et al., 2000; Adler et al., 2008 Duffy et al, 2017, Operario et al, 2004). This scale was used as a demographic descriptor in the present study.

Interest Congruence.

The O*NET Interest Profiler Short Form (OIP-SF; Rounds et al, 2010) was used to assess for individual career interests. The OIP-SF is a 60-item measure of career interests designed to maximize its utility in practical situations (Rounds et al, 2010). It includes 10 items per RIASEC category (i.e., Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional). Participants were asked to indicate to what degree they would like to perform specified work activities on five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly *dislike* to *strongly like*. Examples of tasks included on the OIP-SF include "Lay brick or tile" and "Develop a new medicine." Scores range from 0 to 40 on each of the RIASEC categories. Categories were rank ordered from highest to lowest which results in

the top three being included in the participants' Holland code. The OIP-SF has shown acceptable evidence for internal consistency (Rounds et al, 2010), test-retest reliability (Rounds et al, 2010) and both convergent and discriminant validity (Rounds et al, 1999; Rounds et al, 2010). Internal consistency was evaluated for each subscale within the OIP-SF and ranged from good (α=.86) to high (α=.90). Interpretation of Cronbach's Alpha for this and the following measures was evaluated using recommendations by Field (2018).

Interest congruence was measured in three steps. First, an individual Holland code was determined for each participant using the OIP-SF (Rounds et al, 2010). Second, a Holland code was determined for each participant's reported occupational title through the Dictionary of Holland's Occupational Codes (DHOC; Gottfredson & Holland, 1996). Occupations that were not found in the DHOC were searched in O*NET which also provides Holland codes for each occupation included in the database. Finally, interest congruence was calculated using Iachan's index (Iachan, 1984).

Iachan's Agreement Index (Iachan, 1984) was used to measure congruence between individual and occupational Holland codes. The method was carried out by comparing the Holland code for each participant and their occupation to determine the codes' degree of match. Perfect matches consist of a letter appearing in the same position in each code (i.e., the letter A is in the first position in both the individual and occupational Holland codes). A close match occurs when the same letter is found in each code, but they are in different but adjacent positions (i.e., the letter A is in the first position for the individual Holland code and in the second position for the occupational code). Matches are considered marginal when the same letter appears in non-adjacent places (i.e., the letter A is in the first position for the individual and in the last position for

the occupation). When a RIASEC letter only appears in one code it is considered a "no match." Scores are derived from summing the score for each letter in the code and can range from 0 (i.e., no matching letters) to 28 (i.e., perfect match of all letters and positions). Iachan Agreement Index scores were the score used in analysis.

Decent Work.

The Decent Work Scale (DWS; Duffy et al, 2017) was used to assess the extent to which employees engage in decent work that includes access to core resources and a work environment that satisfy their basic needs (Duffy et al, 2017). Examples of items included on the DWS include "my employer provides acceptable options for healthcare" and "the values of my organization match my family values." Participants are instructed to indicate the degree of their agreement with each statement on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." A total score was calculated and used in the analysis (Duffy et al, 2017). Higher scores on the DWS indicate that participants' jobs represent decent work. The Decent Work Scale has shown evidence for strong internal consistency and validity (Duffy et al, 2017; Duffy et al, 2019). Internal consistency for the present sample was good ($\alpha = .82$).

Subjective Well-being.

Subjective Well-being (SWB) was assessed following recommendations from Harris and Rottinghaus (2017) which include using two items to assess both the cognitive appraisal (i.e., life satisfaction) and affective experience (i.e., happiness) of well-being. Life satisfaction is assessed by asking participants to respond on a 10-point Likert scale ranging from "completely satisfied" to "completely dissatisfied" to the following question: "All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these

days?". Participants will indicate their degree of happiness by responding on a four-point scale ranging from "not at all happy" to "very happy" to the question: "Taking all things together, would you say you are…?". Per Harris and Rottinghaus (2017), responses on each item are converted into z-scores, summed, and then averaged to create overall measure of SWB to alleviate difficulties arising from the different response options and scales. Higher scores indicate…Single item measures for SWB have been used in a variety of studies involving career interests (Hoeglund & Hansen, 1999; Rottinghaus et al, 2009) and have resulted in moderate correlation estimates with other measures of well-being ranging from .40 to .66 (Diener, 1984). Researchers point out that single item approaches are appropriate and comparable to longer measures of straightforward constructs such as satisfaction (Wanous et al, 1997; Pavot & Diener, 1993). These points were taken into consideration by Harris and Rottinghaus (2017) who demonstrated that their two-item composite measure of SWB provided sufficient evidence for both test-retest reliability and convergent validity.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) was assessed using the Organizational Citizenship Behavior Checklist (OCB-C; Fox et al, 2011). The OCB-C consists of 20 items through which participants indicate the frequency of engaging in behaviors consistent with organizational citizenship at work. Responses are on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "never" to "every day." Higher scores indicate more frequent engagement in OCB. The OCB-C has shown evidence for reliability and validity (Fox et al, 2011; Fox et al, 2011). Spector and Che (2014) point out that employees may more accurately report OCB than either supervisors or peers. Additionally, research

provides significant evidence for convergence between employee and employer OCB ratings (Carpenter et al, 2014; Fox et al, 2011). Considering the additional practical difficulties of collecting data from employers and that our hypotheses mainly revolve around personal perceptions of workplace performance, the present study only collected responses from participants. Internal consistency for the present study was good (α = .92).

Task Performance.

Task Performance was assessed using seven items from Williams and Anderson's (1991) evaluation of in-role behavior employee performance. Participants responded on a six-point Likert scale ranging from "disagree strongly" to "agree strongly" (Spector & Che, 2014). Many studies evaluating task performance utilize both employee and employer ratings (Marcus & Wagner, 2015). While Conway and Huffcut's (1997) meta-analysis showed low interrater reliability between supervisor, peer, and self-ratings of job performance (r = .14-.22), some studies show similar performance rankings between the two (Spector & Che, 2014). Additionally, Mabe and West (1982) point out that differences in self-reported ability from external ratings may be primarily due to study conditions. The following steps suggested by Mabe and West (1982) were taken in an attempt to increase the accuracy of self-rated ability: first, instructions were provided asking the participants to make a social comparison, second, participants were provided an assurance of anonymity, and third, the task performance measure was placed at the end of the survey to ensure participants had sufficient practice self-reporting information. Higher scores on this scale indicate higher levels of task performance Internal consistency for the present study was acceptable (α = .78).

COVID-19 Pandemic Impact.

The Pandemic Stress Index (PSI; Harkness, 2020) was used to evaluate the impact of COVID-19 on study participants. While pandemic impacts were not a hypothesized aspect of this study, the PSI results are used to provide context of what the participants were experiencing in relation to the pandemic during the data collection period. When asked on a 1-5 scale, "How much is/did COVID-19 impact your day-to-day life?" participants responded a 3.6 on average with a range of one to five. Of those who responded to it, 88.3% reported having significant changes in their lives or behavior. Percentages of the types of behavior changes experienced may be found in Table 2. Participants were also able to outline the specific impact COVID-19 had on their lives. These are summarized in Tables 3 and 4. Several participants provided qualitative responses regarding the impact COVID-19 had on their lives. Examples of participant responses included "breaking out into acne because of the covid mask" and "COVID-19 changed my family's life." Some participants appeared highly impacted by the pandemic, stating things such as "severe impact on financial and mental health." Others expressed anger towards those who they saw as not taking the pandemic seriously: "pissed off because people are idiots and don't care about this covid-19 stuff until it's too late." While others appeared less bothered by the pandemic, and more eager to move forward: "No" and "get over it and move forward."

CHAPTER III - RESULTS

Preliminary Analysis

A one-way ANOVA was carried out to ensure there were no significant differences on study measures based on whether participants were employed currently or are currently unemployed but were in the past six months. Results reflected no significant differences between these two groups for the decent work (F (1,103) = .362, p = .54), interest congruence (F (1,103) = .011, p = .91), subjective well-being (F (1,103) = 1.826, p = .18), organizational citizenship behavior (F (1,103) = 2.07, p = .15), or task performance (F (1,103) = .79, p = .37). Evaluation of normality of residuals (i.e., skewness and kurtosis), and influential cases (i.e., multivariate outliers), homoscedasticity, linearity, and multicollinearity revealed no problems with these assumptions. Means and standard deviations for and correlations between study variables are found in Table 5. Of note, is that the only significant correlation between variables included in the model is between subjective well-being and decent work (r = .39, p<.001).

Model

Path analysis was conducted using Mplus statistical software to address study hypotheses. Model fit was assessed using the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). The model, which may be found in Figure A1, was just identified (i.e., df = 0) and model fit statistics suggested good fit overall for the data (CFI = 1.00; TLI = 1.00; RMSEA = .00). Most study hypotheses were not supported with a non-significant relationship between interest congruence and subjective well-being (β = .005, p = .953), organizational citizenship

behavior (β = -.05, p = .57), and task performance (β = -.06, p = .47). Additionally, results reflected a non-significant relationship between decent work and organizational citizenship behavior (β =.07, p = .44) and task performance (β = -.13, p = .16). However, the hypothesis that decent work would account for a significant amount of the variance in subjective well-being was supported (β =.39, p < .001). Decent work accounted for approximately 16.4% of the variance in subjective well-being for our model (R^2=.164, p<.05). Additional analyses evaluating the differential explanatory power of decent work and interest congruence were not conducted since interest congruence did not account for a significant amount of the variance in any study variables.

As a post hoc analysis given that the study took place during the pandemic, bivariate correlations were also conducted to evaluate the potential relationship between the degree to which participants were impacted by COVID-19, as measured on the PSI, and study variables. The correlation between decent work and the degree of impact by COVID-19 (see Table 5) was significant (r = -.21, p<.05), indicating that the more someone was impacted by COVID-19, the more difficulties the participants had in maintaining decent work. This is consistent, considering a large proportion of participants experienced work-related difficulties as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Pandemic impacts were not significantly correlated with any other study variables.

CHAPTER IV – DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to evaluate the differential efficacy of decent work and interest congruence in accounting for the variance in SWB, task performance, and OCB in a sample of individual's experiencing economic marginalization. It was hypothesized that both interest congruence and decent work would account for a significant amount of the variance in each outcome variable. It was also hypothesized that neither predictor would account for significantly more variance than the other. None of our hypothesized relationships between interest congruence and the three outcome variables were supported. Only decent work accounted for a significant amount of the variance in subjective well-being. The significant relationship between decent work and SWB adds another layer of support for the importance of securing work that satisfies basic needs, especially for those experiencing greater levels of economic marginalization.

There are a number of reasons that likely explain why other current study hypotheses were not supported. First, neither interest congruence nor decent work accounted for a significant amount to the variance in self-reported OCB or task performance. This may have been because both OCB and task performance were self-reported. While there was previous support for examining these variables from the perspective of the employee (Carpenter et al, 2014; Fox et al, 2011; Mabe & West, 1982; Spector & Che, 2014), additional performance ratings from employers would have added a higher level of confidence in their report. Finally, the measure of OCB involved a combination of items referring to OCB directed at co-workers and towards the organization. Perhaps decent work or interest congruence would result in more OCB

towards an organization (i.e., organizational commitment) rather than interpersonal OCB towards coworkers. This is supported by research indicating that decent work results in lower levels of withdrawal intention and work engagement and commitment, implying a higher level of organizational commitment (Duffy et al., 2017; Kashyap et al., 2021; Nam & Ki, 2019). Future research should implement this more fine-grained evaluation of OCB to determine if making this distinction would influence results.

While decent work accounted for a significant amount of the variance in subjective well-being, interest congruence did not. Theoretically, this is consistent as individuals who experience significant economic marginalization may not be as impacted by having work that does not satisfy their interests as they would be by work that does not satisfy their basic needs. However, further research is needed to confirm this finding. One factor that may have impacted results involves the calculation of interest congruence itself. There is ongoing debate among interest congruence researchers regarding the most powerfully predictive manner to evaluate interest congruence. Research appears to be most supportive of interest fit indices utilizing profile correlation, the method utilized in the present study, for predicting similar outcomes (Nye et al., 2017; Xu & Li., 2020). However, Hoff and colleagues (2020) found that matching interest scales was a more robust predictor of the same outcomes. Further, Wiegland and colleagues (2021) suggest that null findings in interest congruence research may be due to the use of single-fit indices and the assumption that each interest category (e.g., Investigative, Artistic) will equally impact satisfaction or well-being. While their study was focused primarily on job satisfaction, a similar phenomenon may be playing out here. Finally, very few studies, including those discussed here, have evaluated interest congruence with populations

similar to what was recruited for this study. Thus, further research is needed to compare the differential predictive power of distinct approaches to interest congruence measurement within a sample similar to what was recruited here. Regardless of the lack of significant findings in the present study, interest congruence likely continues to represent an important factor to consider for those who highly value work that is congruent with their interests. Since work values were not measured in the present study, it is unclear how this factor may have impacted the results.

Limitations and Future Directions

All of these results should be viewed from the perspective that data collection occurred exclusively only during the COVID-19 pandemic. Results indicated that there was no correlation between the degree of impact from COVID-19, based on the single item global indicator utilized, and most study variables. However, there was a significant negative relationship between decent work and the impact from COVID-19 on study participants. Thus, future research should evaluate whether the significant findings decent work and this study's outcome variables persists after the pandemic is concluded. Additionally, this study was initially designed for in-person data collection in order to allow for more flexibility with securing participants who might not otherwise have access to it due to restricted internet access. Thus, there may have been a large proportion of individuals whose responses may have influenced the results had the COVID-19-related restrictions on study sampling methods not been a factor. Relatedly, many individuals who completed the survey were excluded for not being employed in the past six-months, a problem which became increasingly challenging as the pandemic continued. Despite the limitations associated with online data collection, this approach did result in a more

nationally representative sample than would have been possible with in-person data collection with 28 states being represented in the sample.

One of the unique aspects of this study was the use of an individualized social class screening approach. Many studies have utilized composite measures of socioeconomic status which heavily rely on a sociological perspective (Diemer, et al., 2013). This approach has been highly criticized for its limited capacity to account for the individual's socioeconomic position in their own communities and for the lack of consideration of an individual's subjective account of their own standing within their community (Diemer, 2013; Liu & Ali, 2005). Vocational research has been inconsistent in their application of recommendations for the evaluation of social class, with some studies emphasizing objective indicators and others relying on measures of subjective social status. This study took a different approach by creating individualized social class scores from commonly used objective indicators. While these scores may be considered *composite* measures, they differ from other composite measures in that in individual is compared to their own socioeconomic environments rather than a broad national trend. Subjective social status was also evaluated but was not used in screening. This was the first time such an approach to the individualized assessment of the combination of objective indicators of social class was used. This method may be aid in the measurement of any future social class research.

There were some unique limitations in connection with the social class screening method outlined above. In order to facilitate timely data collection, the threshold for participation was lowered from three points on the social class screener to two. While this allowed for the inclusion of a larger proportion of the original sample in analysis, it also

suggests that the sample likely does not represent as high a level of economic marginalization as was originally intended. Future research should emphasize more targeted sampling methodologies which will increase the likelihood of participants receiving a higher score on the social class screener. Relatedly, studies should be performed to evaluate the psychometric qualities of the screener presented in this study to establish the extent of its research-related utility. Future research should also seek to replicate this study while incorporating third-party reports of participant OCB and task performance.

Practical Considerations

The finding that decent work accounted for a significant amount of the variance in SWB for those coming from lower social class backgrounds has important practical considerations for those who seek to promote the well-being of this population. Researchers who emphasize decent work provide a number of recommendations for how career practitioners may effectively assist their clients who come from lower social class backgrounds (Blustein et al, 2019; Kenny et al, 2019; Kozan et al, 2019). Some have pointed out that by helping clients who experience marginalization or economic constraints develop the ability to criticize and challenge oppression in their work environments, the client would be able to advocate for more decent work in their own situation (Duffy et al, 2018; Kenny et al, 2019; Tebbe et al, 2019). For example, a client may ask for regular time off at their workplace after learning that requests for time to rest is a reasonable request of their employer. Tebbe, Allan, and Bell (2019) make the important point that not everyone has the ability to secure work based solely off interest; thus, decent work should be considered a primary goal for such individuals. Researchers

recommend offering career services at lower rates for those who have fewer financial resources, placing social class at the forefront of career assessments, and emphasizing helping clients achieve what they perceive as decent work rather than exclusively focusing on guiding clients through more traditional career pathways (Blustein et al, 2008; Duffy et al, 2018; Kozan et al, 2019). Recommendations have also been made that career practitioners attempt to both increase their understanding of the predictors of decent work (e.g., economic constraints, marginalization) and to help clients develop a more positive view of decent work through an emphasis on the related increase in well-being (Kim et al, 2017; Kim et al, 2019). Riberio (2021) explored the potential usefulness of discursive validation in assisting individuals from lower social class backgrounds develop a more direct trajectory towards decent work. Ribeiro's (2021) qualitative study provided preliminary evidence for the effectiveness of such an approach. Young and colleagues (2021) introduced a relational approach to career counseling, informed by contextual action theory, that may benefit from further exploration to determine if this approach may help to promote decent work among those from experiencing economic marginalization. These recommendations for career practitioners have the potential to significantly bolster current approaches when helping clients identify potential jobs and career pathways.

There have also been numerous recommendations regarding advocacy for systemic changes within the world of work to enable more access to decent work for people from lower social class backgrounds. Recommendations commonly include a call for career practitioners to engage in advocacy efforts to increase awareness of issues of marginalization and discrimination in work (Blustein et al, 2019; Duffy et al, 2016;

Douglass et al, 2017; Kozan et al, 2019; Tebbe et al, 2019). These recommendations also include increasing funding opportunities for low-cost career services and promoting broader changes to grow the amount of decent work available in the marketplace for people coming from marginalized backgrounds (Blustein et al, 2019; Duffy et al, 2016; Douglass et al, 2017; Kozan et al, 2019; Tebbe et al, 2019). Blustein and colleagues (2019) provide a list of 10 recommendations for career practitioners focused on increasing a sense of self-determination for lower social class clients and creating a broader system where decent work is both available and valued. Researchers have also suggested developing specific interventions and structural supports aimed at helping individuals from marginalized and economically disadvantaged groups secure decent work (Autin et al, 2018; Kim et al, 2019). These suggestions for systemic changes would significantly expand the range of options clients of career practitioners may consider as they navigate the ever-more complex world of work. Perhaps this would also provide more opportunities for clients to pursue work coinciding with interests.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to clarify the role interest congruence and decent work play in promoting the SWB, OCB, and task performance of individuals who come from lower social class backgrounds. Results may have been impacted by data collection during a global pandemic and indicated that neither interest congruence nor decent work accounted for a significant amount of the variance in most outcome variables. However, decent work did account for a significant amount of the variance in participant subjective well-being (SWB). Thus, career practitioners seeking to promote the SWB of their clients from similar backgrounds may benefit from engaging in work that increases their client's

capacity for securing and maintaining decent work. Future research should seek to confirm the findings in this study by engaging in in-person data collection where possible and evaluating additional variables such as attitudes towards upward mobility

APPENDIX A – TABLES

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Characteristic	n	%
Gender		
Female	63	60
Male	41	39
Gender Non-Binary	1	1
Race		
White, non-Hispanic	66	62.9
Black, non-Hispanic	20	19
Hispanic	11	10.5
Asian/Pacific Islander	6	5.6
Bi-Racial	1	1
Declined to Respond	1	1
Education		
Some High School	9	8.6
High School/GED	16	15.2
Some College	21	20
Trade/Technical/Vocational Training	3	2.9
Associate Degree	17	16.2
Bachelor's Degree	36	34.3
Master's Degree	3	2.9
Self-Described Subjective Social Status		
Lower Class	15	14.3
Working Class	48	45.7
Middle Class	34	32.4
Upper Middle Class	6	5.7
Upper Class	2	1.9

Table 2

Pandemic Stress Index: Changes in Behavior and Life Impact

Type of Change	n	%
Practiced social distancing		
Yes	77	74
No	27	26
Isolated or quarantined self		
Yes	36	35
No	67	65
Cared for someone at home		
Yes	24	76.9
No	80	76.9
Worked from home		
Yes	24	23.3
No	79	76.7
Not working		
Yes, I am not working	27	26
No, I am working	77	74
Reason for not working		
Because I was sick or under quarantine	2	11.1
Because someone in my household was sick or under quarantine	2	11.2
Because I was laid off or lost my employment	7	38.9
Because my place of work was closed and didn't offer remote work options	7	38.9
Experienced a change in healthcare services		
Yes	32	30.8
No	72	69.2
Type of change in healthcare services		
Increased healthcare services	16	51.6
Decreased healthcare services	15	48.4
Followed media coverage related to COVID-19		
Yes	58	55.8
No	46	44.2
Changed travel plans		
Yes	58	55.8
No	46	44.2
Table 2 Continued		
Type of change in travel plan		
Travelled more	2	3.5
Travelled less	55	96.5

Note. Percentages may not equal 100%. Not everyone who responded that they had a change specified the type of change they experienced. Not all participants completed the Pandemic Stress Index

Table 3

Pandemic Stress Index: Quarantine and Isolation Data

Type of Isolation	Range	M	SD
Days participants practiced social distancing	355	143.88	108.11
Days participants had to break social distances	365	51.42	41.64
Days participants weird isolated or quarantined	362	60.38	90
Days participants had to brake isolation or quarantine	100	6.27	10.51

Table 4

Pandemic Stress Index: Specific Impact on Participant Lives

Type of Impact	n	%
Being diagnosed with COVID-19		
Yes	6	5.9
No	96	94.1
Fear of getting COVID-19		
Yes	64	62.7
No	38	37.3
Worrying about friends, family, partners, etc.		
Yes	82	80.4
No	20	19.6
Location of people participant was worried about		
Locally	60	73.2
In other parts of the US	19	23.2
Outside the US	3	3.7
COVID-19-related stigma or discrimination		
Yes	27	26.5
No	75	73.5
Personal financial loss		
Yes	60	58.8
No	42	41.2
Frustration or boredom		
Yes	76	74.5
No	26	25.5
Not having enough basic supplies		
Yes	39	38.2
No	63	61.8
More anxiety		
Yes	72	70.6
No	30	29.4
More depression		
Yes	62	60.8
No	40	39.2
Changes in sleep patterns		
Yes	69	67.6
No	33	32.4
Increased alcohol or substance use		
Yes	36	35.3
No	66	64.7
Change in sexual activity		
Yes	30	29.4
No	72	70.6

Table 4 continued

Type of change in sexual activity		
Increase	7	23.3
Decrease	23	76.7
Loneliness		
Yes	59	58.4
No	42	41.6
Confusion about COVID-19 and related topics (e.g., quarantine)		
Yes	24	23.5
No	78	76.5
Contributing to greater good by preventing spread of COVID-19		
Yes	71	69.6
No	31	30.4
Getting emotional support from others		
Yes	60	58.8
No	42	41.2
Getting financial support from others		
Yes	46	45.1
No	56	54.9

Note. Percentages may not equal 100%. Not everyone who responded that they had a change specified the type of change they experienced. Not all participants completed the Pandemic Stress Index

Table 5

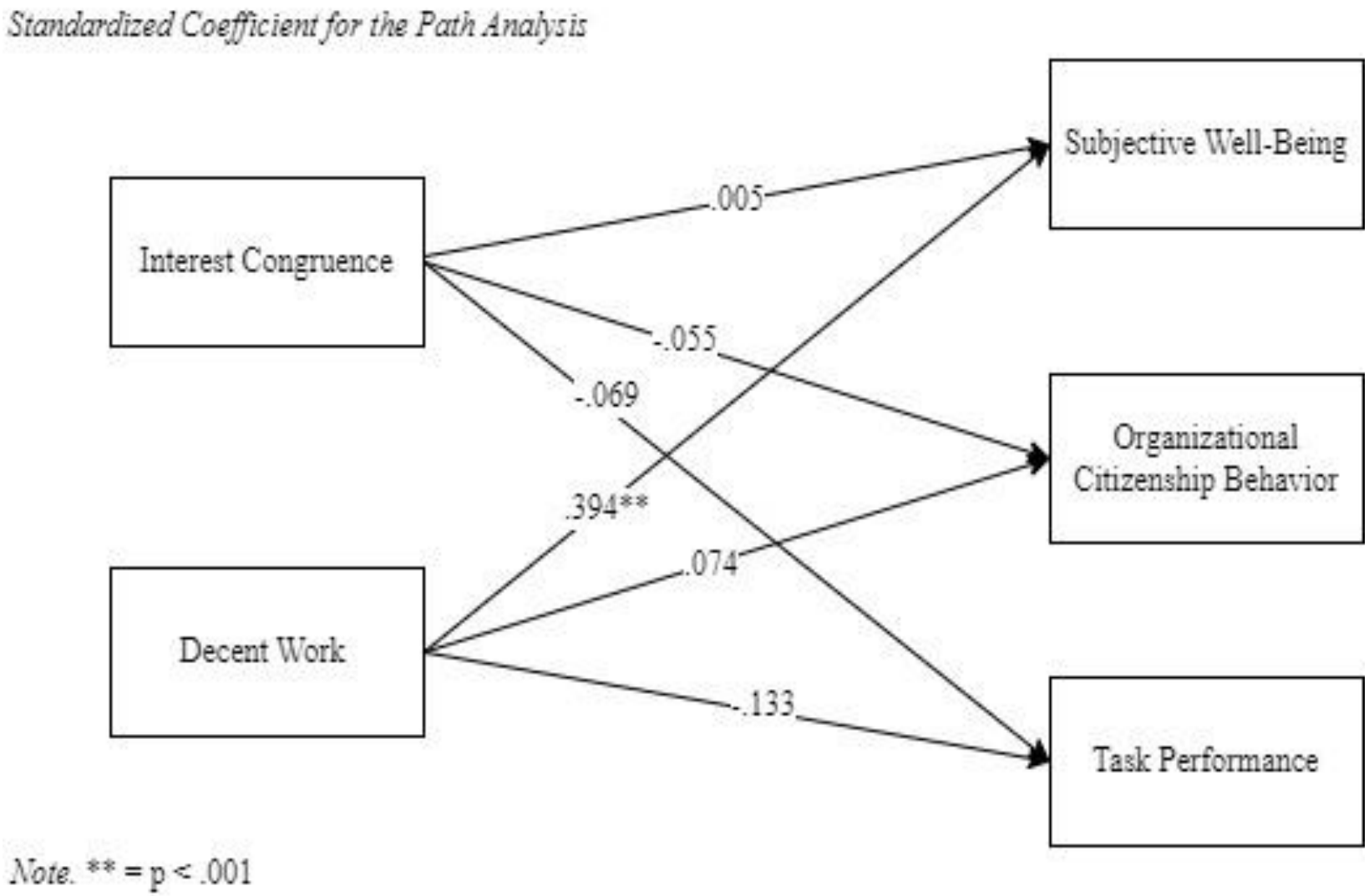
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Interest Congruence	12.97	8.19	—					
2. Decent Work	68.09	14.20	.025	—				
3. Subjective Well-being	-.046	.9155	.015	.394**	—			
4. Organizational Citizenship Behavior	60.90	15.84	-.053	.073	.056	—		
5. Task Performance	5.03	.728	-.072	.171	-.033	.048	—	
6. Degree of impact by COVID-19	3.60	1.20	-.139	-.212*	-.113	-.085	.127	—

Note. * = $p<.05$ ** = $p<.001$

APPENDIX B – MODEL FIGURE

Figure A1.



APPENDIX C – DISSERTATION SOCIAL CLASS SCREENING INSTRUCTIONS

Social Class Screening Procedure and Roles

1. Ben will download data at a minimum bi-weekly to assign participant case numbers
2. Ben will transfer social class screening indicators into the Data Screening Form
3. Ben will inform social class screeners of the updated Data Screening Form
4. Data screeners will be provided a list of case numbers they are assigned to screen
5. Data screeners will follow the outline below to assign appropriate points to participants
6. Data screeners will have 48 hours to screen data and will email Ben if they are unable to finish before this timeline
7. Data screeners will email Ben as soon as they complete data screening assignments and will include the number of cases that met social class criteria for inclusion
8. Ben will adjust cut-off values as needed and will inform data screeners of any changes

Important Reminders

- Data sets contain sensitive, identifying information (e.g. physical address of participants). Thus, data should only be reviewed when the data screener can be absolutely assured that no one else can see the information.
- All data sets related to this study are password protected. Passwords will be communicated via telephone and should not be left in places where someone could easily come across them. Any loss of passwords should be communicated to Ben immediately as he will have to update the password to prevent any potential breaches of privacy. NO DATA should be downloaded onto a data screeners personal computer.
- DO NOT rearrange, delete, or alter any data or information contained in the Data Screening Form beyond fields designated for point assignment.
- Only screen the participants to whom you have been assigned.
- Cut-off values listed below may need to be adjusted based off the incoming sample. Please monitor communications from Ben regarding any changes. Efforts will be made to remove all out-of-date documents; however, if you are unsure if the documents you have are the most up-to-date file, please reach out to Ben before proceeding with screening.
- There will likely be many blank spaces for each participant, this is normal for the social class screening items.
- If you have any concerns or questions regarding the assignment of points, or anything related to social class screening, please contact Ben immediately.

Social Class Data Screening Rubric

Social Class Point System:

- Scale ranges from 0 to 5
- Participants with scores ≥ 3 will be considered eligible for inclusion in the sample

- Assign points to each participant based off the cut-off values for each indicator provided below

Five social class indicators:

1. Income
2. Neighborhood Disadvantage Level
3. State or Federal Aid
4. Education Level
5. Occupational Prestige Ranking

Indicator	Cut-Off Value
Income Step 1: Open the up-to-date Data Screening Form and find the participant's total 2019 household income under the variable name "*tot_income*" Step 2: Compare the participant's reported hourly (cur_pay_h; 6_pay_h), bi-weekly (cur_pay_b; 6_pay_b), monthly (cur_pay_m; 6_pay_m), yearly (cur_pay_y; 6_pay_y) pay to their reported total income by performing the following calculations: ((Cur_pay_h OR 6_pay_h * 40)*4)*12 (Cur_pay_b OR 6_pay_b * 2)*12 Cur_pay_m OR 6_pay_m * 12 *No calculation for cur_pay_y OR 6_pay_y* Step 3: Inform Ben if there are any notable discrepancies (e.g. Reported 30,000 total 2019 income but cur_pay_y is 70,000) Step 4: Assign points for *tot_income* based off the up-to-date rubric and record them in the Data Screening Form **Note:** Points are assigned based off *tot_income*, not the other income variables.	1 point = Income ≤ $50,000/year .5 point = Income >$50,000/year, <$70,000 0 point = Income ≥ $70,000/year
Neighborhood: **Neighborhood Atlas Rankings** Step 1: Open the up-to-date Data Screening Form and find the participant's address under the variable name "*add*" Step 2: Click on the link above that will take you to the Neighborhood Atlas mapping function Step 3: Click on the drop-down menu titled "select a state" and click on the participant's state of residence Step 4: Write the participant's address in the box titled "Enter a full address and search to place a marker on the map." Step 5: Check the State Decile and the National Percentile in the pop-up box which appears when you enter the address	1 point = State Decile ≥ 6 AND National Percentile ≥ 61 .5 point = State Decile ≥ 6 OR National Percentile ≥ 61 0 point = State Decile < 6 AND National Percentile < 61

Step 6: Record State Decile and National Percentile in the Data Screening Form Step 7: Assign points based off the most up-to-date rubric and record them in the Data Screening Form	**Note:** Inform Ben if the state of residence is *not* Mississippi as the ranking system may differ.
State or Federal Aid Step 1: Open the up-to-date Data Screening Form and find the participant's federal/state aid status under the variable name "*gov_aid*" or "*gov_aid_1_text*" Step 2: Assign points based off the up-to-date rubric and record them in the Data Screening Form	1 point = Food stamps, Medicaid, Medicare, Disability .5 point = Unemployment 0 point = None
Education Step 1: Open the up-to-date Data Screening Form and find the participant's highest level of education completed under the variable name "*ed*" or "*ed_10_TEXT*" Step 2: Assign points based off the up-to-date rubric and record them in the Data Screening Form	1 point = Some high school, high school or GED, some college, associate degree .5 point = Bachelor's degree 0 point = Master's degree, PhD, MD, any graduate degree
Occupational Prestige Step 1: Open the up-to-date Data Screening Form and find the participant's highest level of education completed under one of the following variable names: "*cur_job_2*", "*cur_job_txt*", "*6_job_2*", "*6_job_txt*" Step 2: Search for the occupation in the file: "PRESTG10SEI10_supplement" Step 3: Record the prestige rating found in "PREST10PLUS" column in the Data Screening Form Step 4: Assign points based off the up-to-date rubric and record them in the Data Screening Form **Note:** Do NOT use PREST10 as it does not account for rater effects.	1 point = prest10 < 50 .5 point = prest10 > 50 <75 0 point = prest10 ≥ 75

APPENDIX D - DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: Please fill in the blank or check the response that best applies to you.

General Participant Characteristics

1. Age (You must be 18 years or older to continue):
   (*Here there will be a sliding scale for participants to use)*

2. Gender:
   - ☐ Male
   - ☐ Female
   - ☐ Other: (please specify) *(Here there will be a text entry box)*
   - ☐

3. Racial/Ethnic Background:
   - ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander
   - ☐ Black (Non-Hispanic)
   - ☐ Hispanic
   - ☐ White (Non-Hispanic)
   - ☐ Other: (please specify) *(Here there will be a text entry box)*
   - ☐

4. Marital Status
   - ☐ Single
   - ☐ Married
   - ☐ Divorced
   - ☐ Widowed/Widower
   - ☐ In a relationship
   - ☐ Other: (please specify) *(Here there will be a text entry box)*

5. How did you hear about this survey? If you responded because of an announcement from a specific group or organization, please write the name of the organization as well.
   (Here there will be a text entry box)

6. Have you experienced serious difficulties because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

If Yes:

7. Are you deaf or do you have serious difficulty hearing?
   - Yes
   - No

8. Are you blind or do you have serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses?
   - Yes
   - No

9. Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, do you have serious difficulty concentrating remembering or making decisions?
   - Yes
   - No

10. Do you have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs?
    - Yes
    - No

11. Do you have difficulty dressing or bathing?
    - Yes
    - No

12. Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, do you have difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping?
    - Yes
    - No

If No: Move to other household members' disability questions

13. Has anyone currently living with you experienced serious difficulties because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition?
    - Yes
    - No

If Yes:

14. How many people currently living with you experience serious difficulties because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition?
    (Here there will be a sliding scale)
    - Yes
    - No

15. Is this person deaf or does he/she have serious difficulty hearing?
    - Yes
    - No

16. Is this person blind or does he/she have serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses?
    - Yes
    - No

17. Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, does this person have serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions?
    - Yes
    - No

18. Does this person have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs?
    - Yes
    - No

19. Does this person have difficulty dressing or bathing?
    - Yes
    - No

20. Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, does this person have difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping?
    - Yes
    - No

If No: Continue to the rest of the questionnaire

21. What is the highest level of education you have **completed**?
    - Some high school
    - High school or GED
    - Some college
    - Trade/technical/vocational training
    - Associates degree
    - Bachelor's Degree
    - Master's Degree
    - PhD
    - MD
    - Other: please specify *(Here there will be a text entry box)*

22. Do you receive any type of government aid (either federal or state) such as Medicaid, Medicare, SNAP, TANF, etc.?
    - Yes, please specify: *(Here there will be a text entry box)*
    - No

23. What is your current physical address?
    (*Here there will be a text entry box*)

24. How many children or others financially dependent do you currently have?
    - 0
    - 1
    - 2
    - 3
    - 4
    - 5
    - 6
    - 7
    - 8
    - More than 8

25. Are you currently enrolled in school or another educational program?
    - Yes (please specify):
    - No

26. How would you describe your current social class?
    - Upper class
    - Upper middle class
    - Middle class
    - Working class
    - Lower class

27. Are you currently employed?
    - Yes
    - No

28. What is your household income in 2019?
    (*Here there will be a text entry box*)

Flow based off employment response:

If yes:

29. Please select your **current job** from the drop-down menu below. The first choice is a broad list of job categories. The second choice is where you will find your specific job. Please choose the specific job which most closely relates to your current job.
    (Here there will be a drill-down menu including the occupations listed in Duncan's Socioeconomic Index)

30. If you were unable to find your **current job** in the drop-down menu, please enter it into the text box below.
    (Here there will be a text entry box)

31. How do you typically think about your pay?
    a. Hourly
    b. Bi-weekly
    c. Monthly
    d. Yearly

Flow based off pay frequency response:

If hourly:

32. What is your typical hourly pay?
    (*Here there will be a text entry box)*

If bi-weekly:

What is your typical bi-weekly pay?
(*Here there will be a text entry box)*

If monthly:

What is your typical monthly pay?
(*Here there will be a text entry box)*

If yearly:

What is your typical yearly pay?
(*Here there will be a text entry box)*

Flow based off employment response:

If no:

33. Have you been employed in the last 6 months?
    - ☐ Yes
    - ☐ No

Flow based off 6-month recent employment:

If yes:

1. Please select your **most recent job** from the drop-down menu below. The first choice is a broad list of job categories. The second choice is where you will find your specific job. Please choose the specific job which most closely relates to your most recent job.
   (Here there will be a drill-down menu including the occupations listed in Duncan's Socioeconomic Index)

2. If you were unable to find your **most recent job** in the drop-down menu, please enter it into the text box below.
   (Here there will be a text entry box)

3. How do you typically think about your pay?
    a. Hourly
    b. Bi-weekly
    c. Monthly
    d. Yearly

Flow based off 6-month recent employment pay frequency response:

If hourly:

4. What was your typical hourly pay in your most recent job?
   (*Here there will be a text entry box)*

If bi-weekly:

What was your typical bi-weekly pay in your most recent job?
(*Here there will be a text entry box)*

If monthly:

What was your typical monthly pay in your most recent job?
(*Here there will be a text entry box)*

If yearly:

What was your typical yearly pay in your most recent job?
(*Here there will be a text entry box)*

Flow based off 6-month recent employment:

If no:

Exited out of survey and informed if their ineligibility to participate

Questions Regarding Additional Household Income

1. Is anyone else who is currently living with you employed?
    a. Yes
    b. No

    Flow based off current other employment in the home

    If yes:
2. How many people living in your home, other than you, are currently employed?
    a. *Here there will be a sliding scale*

3. What is their relationship to you?
    a. Spouse
    b. Partner
    c. Father
    d. Mother
    e. Sister
    f. Brother
    g. Adult child
    h. Roommate
    i. Other: Please specify *(Here there will be a text entry box)*

4. Please select their **current job** from the drop-down menu below. The first choice is a broad list of job categories. The second choice is where you will find their specific job. Please choose the specific job which most closely relates to their current job.
    (Here there will be a drill-down menu including the occupations listed in Duncan's Socioeconomic Index)

5. If you were unable to find their **current job** in the drop-down menu, please enter it into the text box below.
   (Here there will be a text entry box)

6. How do they typically receive their pay?
   a. Hourly
   b. Bi-weekly
   c. Monthly
   d. Yearly

   Flow based off pay frequency response:

   If hourly:

7. What is their typical hourly pay?
   (*Here there will be a text entry box)*

   If bi-weekly:

   What is their typical bi-weekly pay?
   (*Here there will be a text entry box)*

   If monthly:

   What is their typical monthly pay?
   (*Here there will be a text entry box)*

   If yearly:

   What is their typical yearly pay?
   (*Here there will be a text entry box)*

Flow based off current other employment in the home

If No

8. Is there anyone else who is currently living with you that is not employed but was in the last 6 months?
   a. Yes
   b. No

Flow based off 6-month other employment in the home

If Yes:

9. How many people living in your home, other than you, are not currently employed but have been employed in the last 6 months?
    a. *Here there will be a sliding scale*

10. What is their relationship to you?
    a. Spouse
    b. Partner
    c. Father
    d. Mother
    e. Sister
    f. Brother
    g. Adult child
    h. Roommate
    i. Other: Please specify *(Here there will be a text entry box)*

11. Please select their **most recent job** from the drop-down menu below. The first choice is a broad list of job categories. The second choice is where you will find their specific job. Please choose the specific job which most closely relates to their most recent job.
    (Here there will be a drill-down menu including the occupations listed in Duncan's Socioeconomic Index)

12. If you were unable to find their **most recent job** in the drop-down menu, please enter it into the text box below.
    (Here there will be a text entry box)

13. How did they typically receive their pay in their most recent job?
    a. Hourly
    b. Bi-weekly
    c. Monthly
    d. Yearly

Flow based off pay frequency response:

If hourly:

14. What was their typical hourly pay in their most recent job?
    (*Here there will be a text entry box)*

If bi-weekly:

What was their typical bi-weekly pay in their most recent job?
(*Here there will be a text entry box)*

If monthly:

What was their typical monthly pay in their most recent job?
(*Here there will be a text entry box)*

If yearly:

What was their typical yearly pay in their most recent job?
(*Here there will be a text entry box)*

Questions Regarding Intergenerational Wealth

1. What was your physical address growing up? If you do not remember, please leave this question blank.
   (*Here there will be a text entry box)*

2. Do you have information regarding your father's occupation or education?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

If yes:

1. Please select your father's **most consistent job** from the drop-down menu below. The first choice is a broad list of job categories. The second choice is where you will find your father's specific job. Please choose the specific job which most closely relates to your father's most consistent job.
(Here there will be a drill-down menu including the occupations listed in Duncan's Socioeconomic Index)

2. If you were unable to find your father's **most consistent job** in the drop-down menu, please enter it in the text box below. If you do not have information regarding your father's job or he was not employed, please state that in the text box below.
   (Here there will be a text entry box)

3. What was your father's estimated 12-month income?
   - Don't know
   - Less than $12,140
   - $12,141 to $24,999
   - $25,000 to $34,999
   - $35,000 to $49,999
   - $50,000 or more

4. What is the highest level of education your father **completed**?
   - Don't know
   - Some high school
   - High school or GED
   - Some college
   - Trade/technical/vocational training
   - Associates degree
   - Bachelor's Degree
   - Master's Degree
   - PhD
   - MD
   - Other *(Here there will be a text entry box)*

If no:

Skip to mother's occupation/education

5. Do you have information regarding your mother's occupation or education?
   - Yes
   - No

If yes

1. Please select your mother's **most consistent job** from the drop-down menu below. The first choice is a broad list of job categories. The second choice is where you will find your mother's specific job. Please choose the specific job which most closely relates to your mother's most consistent job.
   (Here there will be a drill-down menu including the occupations listed in Duncan's Socioeconomic Index)

2. If you were unable to find your mother's **most consistent job** in the drop-down menu, please enter it in the text box below. If you do not have information regarding your mother's job or she was not employed, please state that in the text box below.
   (Here there will be a text entry box)

3. What was your mother's estimated 12-month income?
    - Don't Know
    - Less than $12,140
    - $12,141 to $24,999
    - $25,000 to $34,999
    - $35,000 to $49,999
    - $50,000 or more

4. What is the highest level of education your mother **completed**?
    - Don't Know
    - Some high school
    - High school or GED
    - Some college
    - Trade/technical/vocational training
    - Associates degree
    - Bachelor's Degree
    - Master's Degree
    - PhD
    - MD
    - Other *(Here there will be a text entry box)*

If no:

Skip to study measures

APPENDIX E – VALIDITY ITEMS

1. Please select strongly agree for this item
    - Strongly agree
    - Moderately agree
    - Slightly agree
    - Neutral
    - Slightly disagree
    - Moderately disagree
    - Strongly disagree

2. Please select unsure for this item
    - Strongly like
    - Like
    - Unsure
    - Dislike
    - Strongly dislike

3. Please select neither agree nor disagree for this item.
    - Strongly agree
    - Agree
    - Slightly agree
    - Neither Agree nor Disagree
    - Slightly disagree
    - Disagree
    - Strongly disagree

4. Please select once or twice for this item
    - Every day
    - Once or twice/week
    - Once or twice/month
    - Once or twice
    - Never

APPENDIX F – PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT LANGUAGE

For Community Partners

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. ____,

Thank you for your willingness to consider assisting us in distributing this survey evaluating how career interests and decent work account for differences in well-being and job performance. This survey will have significant implications for career practitioners who seek to promote positive work outcomes for their clients experiencing class-related difficulties. This is particularly important for people with disabilities who may experience higher rates of income-related challenges.

Participants for this study must be 18 years of age or older and currently employed or have been employed in the past six months. Additionally, we are aiming to collect data from individuals who come from a lower social class background (e.g. less than $50,000 annual income, disadvantages neighborhoods). However, class-related criteria for participation may change depending on the sample. Participants will receive the opportunity to enter to win 1 of 15, $10.00 gift cards and to receive feedback on their own career interests and information regarding decent work

For your help in distributing this survey, we would love to offer you the opportunity to receive feedback regarding the results of the study and suggestions for incorporation into your organization, a free presentation on the career or mental health-related topic of your choice, or time for their clients to gain additional feedback through free training and brief services. Any of these services will be provided by members of the Vocational Psychology Research Team at the University of Southern Mississippi. Please contact me

for further information regarding potential ways we can help you achieve your goals through this study.

We are attaching some language which is designed to be distributed to potential participants. Would you be willing to send this out to people in your professional network?

Thank you so much for your time. If you have any questions regarding the project, please contact me at benjamin.wright@usm.edu or Dr. Emily Bullock-Yowell at emily.yowell@usm.edu. This study has been approved by the University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board, protocol number 20-264.

Best wishes,

Ben Wright, M.S.

Doctoral Student

Counseling Psychology

University of Southern Mississippi

For Participants

Direct Email

Hello!

You are invited to participate in this 30- to 45-minute survey to explore how career interests and work affect your well-being and job performance. If you are 18 years of age or older and currently employed, or have been employed in the past six months, you are eligible to participate. Additionally, you must make less than $50,000 per year. At the end of the survey you will have the opportunity to enter to win 1 of 15, $10.00 gift cards and to provide contact information to gain additional insight into your own career interests and work. To participate, click on the link below:

Insert Survey Link

Thank you in advance for participating in this study!

If you have any questions regarding this invitation, please contact me at benjamin.wright@usm.edu or Dr. Emily Bullock-Yowell at emily.yowell@usm.edu. This study has been approved by the University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board, protocol number 20-264.

Sincerely,

Ben Wright, M.S.

Doctoral Student

Counseling Psychology

University of Southern Mississippi

Email Blurb or Posting to be Distributed by Community Partners

Want a chance to win 1 of 15, $10 gift cards and to get feedback on your work interests and information on work? Take this 30- to 45-minute survey! You must be over 18 years old and currently employed or have been employed in the last 6 months to participate. Additionally, you must make less than $50,000 per year. Follow the link below to take the survey! This study has been approved by the University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board, protocol number 20-264.

Insert Survey Link

APPENDIX G – STANDARD ELECTRONIC INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

ORI | Office of Research Integrity

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

STANDARD (ONLINE) INFORMED CONSENT

STANDARD (ONLINE) INFORMED CONSENT PROCEDURES

The Project Information and Research Description sections of this form should be completed by the Principal Investigator before submitting this form for IRB approval. Use what is given in the research description and consent sections below when constructing research instrument online.

Last Edited May 13th, 2019

Today's date: 5/15/2020		
PROJECT INFORMATION		
Project Title: Interests and Decent Work's Account of Well-Being and Job Performance in a Lower Social Class Sample		
Principal Investigator: Benjamin Wright	Phone: 601-307-0780	Email: benjamin.wright@usm.edu
College: Education and Human Services	School and Program: Psychology	

RESEARCH DESCRIPTION

1. **Purpose**:

   The purpose of this study is to understand factors about your work that impact your work performance and overall happiness.

2. **Description of Study:**

   In order to participate in this study, you must be currently employed or have been employed in the past 6 months. You must also be at least 18 years of age. Participation in this study will consist of completing a questoinnaire which includes questions about your background, work interests, experiences with work, general sense of happiness, and job performance. It will probably take about 30 to 45 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Quality assurance checks are placed throughout the questoinnaire to make sure you are paying proper attention to the questions.

3. **Benefits:**

   This research will help career practitioners identify better ways to help people find work which leads to a more satisfying life and better job performance. If you complete the questoinnaire, you will have the opportunity to enter to win 1 of 15, $10.00 Gift Cards. You will also have the opportunity ro receive feedback on your work interests with information on decent work by providing your name and email address at the end of the questionnaire.

4. **Risks:**

   There are little to no risks for participating in this study. However, you will be asked to provide your phyiscal addressess. All information related to your participation will be absolutely secure and will not be associated with your name. Information about gift card distribution and educational materials will be sent through email. While confidential communication through email cannot be guaranteed, no data beyond interest results will be included and nothing will be said which could connect your name with any specific responses to study questions. You may find that some questions are sensitive in nature and may be difficult to

answer. If you find that you are distressed by completing this survey, you should notify the researcher. Fatigue or boredome may result due to the large number of questions in the survey.

5. **Confidentiality:**

The records of this study will be kept private. All study data will either be kept on a password protected flashdrive which will be kept in a locked filing cabinet or on a secure web-based folder. Any excel or other files related to this study will be encrypted and password protected. Additionally, any names or email address you provide for the gift card or educational material will be kept in a separate, encrypted electronic file from the rest of your responses. Any identifying information will be deleted to ensure that your information is kept private and secure. Any email communication about incentives like gift cards, interest results, and educational materials will not include any reference to your responses on any other questions included in the survey. No information will be provided in email which could reasonably be used to connect your name to the study or its results. The online survey has security measures to protect your responses and there will be no hard copies of any of your responses. Study findings will be presented generally and with not include any information which could be used to identify you personally. While future researchers may use data from this study, no researcher will have access to to it until they complete the ethics training required by the Unviersity of Southern Mississippi Instiitutional Review Board policy. Any data from this study for future use will not include information which could be used to identify you and will be stored in a secure location to make sure that your information stays safe.

6. **Alternative Procedures:**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are free to not answer any questions or withdraw at any time. However, you will not be given the opportunity to enter to win the gift card or to receive educational materials in work unless you complete the survey. Additionally, researchers may be unable to provide effective feedback about your interests unless you answer all of the questions openly and accurately. There are no alternative ways to participate in this study.

7. **Participant's Assurance:**

This project and this consent form have been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research participant should be directed to the Chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive #5125, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, 601-266-5997.

Any questions about this research project should be directed to the Principal Investigator using the contact information provided above.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

I understand that participation in this project is completely voluntary, and I may withdraw at any time without penalty, prejudice, or loss of benefits. Unless described above, all personal information will be kept strictly confidential, including my name and other identifying information. All procedures to be followed and their purposes were explained to me. Information was given about all benefits, risks, inconveniences, or discomforts that might be expected. Any new information that develops during the project will be provided to me if that information may affect my willingness to continue participation in the project.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

By clicking the box below, I give my consent to participate in this research project.

☐ Check this box if you consent to this study, and then click "Continue." (Clicking "Continue" will not allow you to advance to the study, unless you have checked the box indicating your consent.)

If you do not wish to consent to this study, please close your browser window at this time.

APPENDIX H –IRB APPROVAL LETTER

IRB-20-264 - Initial: Sacco Committee Letter - Expedited and Full

irb@usm.edu <irb@usm.edu>
Tue 5/19/2020 10:11 AM

To: Benjamin Wright <Benjamin.Wright@usm.edu>; Emily Yowell <Emily.Yowell@usm.edu>; Sue Fayard <Sue.Fayard@usm.edu>; Michael Howell <Michael.Howell@usm.edu>; Michaela Donohue <Michaela.Donohue@usm.edu>

Office *of*
Research Integrity

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

118 COLLEGE DRIVE #5125 • HATTIESBURG, MS | 601.266.6576 | USM.EDU/ORI

NOTICE OF INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD ACTION

The project below has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services regulations (45 CFR Part 46), and University Policy to ensure:

- The risks to subjects are minimized and reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered involving risks to subjects must be reported immediately. Problems should be reported to ORI via the Incident template on Cayuse IRB.
- The period of approval is twelve months. An application for renewal must be submitted for projects exceeding twelve months.
- FACE-TO-FACE DATA COLLECTION WILL NOT COMMENCE UNTIL USM'S IRB MODIFIES THE DIRECTIVE TO HALT NON-ESSENTIAL (NO DIRECT BENEFIT TO PARTICIPANTS) RESEARCH.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: IRB-20-264
PROJECT TITLE: Interest's and Decent Work's Account of Well-Being and Job Performance in a Lower Social Class Sample
SCHOOL/PROGRAM: School of Psychology, Psychology
RESEARCHER(S): Benjamin Wright, Emily Yowell

IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Approved
CATEGORY: Expedited

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

PERIOD OF APPROVAL: May 19, 2020

Donald Sacco Jr.

Donald Sacco, Ph.D.
Institutional Review Board Chairperson

REFERENCES

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