Satisfaction with Home-Based Employment

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ABSTRACT: Using data from nine state regional research project on at-home income generation, the relationships of three satisfaction variables to demographic and work situation variables of 899 household managers in households with home-based employment are investigated. The satisfaction variables include quality of life, family income, and control over everyday life. The majority of households are satisfied with their quality of life and control over life although only moderately satisfied with income. One variable is related to the three satisfaction variables, the wage earner's control over the amount of work done in a day.

KEY WORDS: home-based businesses, home-based employment, income satisfaction, life satisfaction.

Introduction

Projections have suggested that by the turn of this century 40 million workers, representing 10 to 20% of the labor force, will be home-based (Ambry, 1988). As increasing numbers of workers acclimate to this work setting, a variety of aspects and impacts of home-based work on the workers and their families or households should be considered. Are households that are engaged in home-based employment...
satisfied with their quality of life, income, and control over life? These aspects of satisfaction affect the quality of their home-based work and their family life. Little is known about satisfaction in these areas in households with home-based employment. If home-based business owners are satisfied, there is justification for encouraging home-based business starts.

The purposes of this research are to (1) determine the degree of quality of life, family income, and control over everyday life satisfaction of household managers in households engaged in home-based employment, (2) compute means for three satisfaction measures by occupational category, and (3) determine the relationship of the satisfaction variables to demographic and work situation variables. Because the analyses are exploratory, simple descriptive statistical procedures are used.

Previous Research

Lacy, Shepard, and Houghland (1979) extensively reviewed literature and found that job satisfaction was positively related to satisfaction with other aspects of life: marriage, family, leisure, health, and place of residence. Orpen (1978) obtained results that suggest work satisfaction has a stronger effect on nonwork satisfaction than the reverse and that there is a causal relationship between job and life satisfaction. These studies indicated the importance of job satisfaction to other aspects of life.

Studies focusing on income satisfaction of persons engaged in small businesses are lacking. Scott (1986) obtained information from women entrepreneurs about the profitability of their small businesses. Although profitability is not the same as income satisfaction, Scott's finding that 72% of the entrepreneurs indicated that their businesses were “more profitable” or “about as profitable.” Burdette's (1990) finding that 24.8% of black female entrepreneurs and 63.4% of white female entrepreneurs in central Ohio felt that their businesses were “more profitable” or “about as profitable” as they expected. This suggests that they were satisfied with their income.

Another way to look at the rewards and economic aspects of entrepreneurship is to ask for primary reasons why they continue in business. Income was the first reason for continuing the business for approximately 42% of the black women and 39% of the white women in Burdette’s (1990) study. Hoover (1986) found that 20% of the 15 rural