

task identity and task significance, (3) establishing relationships with customers, (4) loading jobs vertically with more responsibility, and/or (5) opening feedback channels for the job incumbent. For example, if an automotive mechanic received little feedback on the quality of repair work performed, one redesign strategy would be to solicit customer feedback one month after each repair.

A more recent sequence of two studies conducted in Egypt aimed to disaggregate work autonomy, an important component in job design theory.³⁰ Study 1 included 534 employees in two Egyptian organizations. Study 2 involved 120 managers in four organizations. The results indicated that separate work method, work schedule, and work criteria autonomy were three separate facets of work autonomy. An extension of job characteristics theory, the Work Design Questionnaire (WDQ), measures twenty-one distinct work characteristics in three categories. These are motivational work characteristics such as skill variety and task identity, social characteristics such as interdependence and social support, and work context characteristics such as physical demands and work conditions.³¹

In another international study, the *Job Characteristics Model (JCM)* was tested in a sample of fifty-seven jobs from thirty-seven organizations in Hong Kong.³² Job incumbents and their supervisors both completed questionnaires about the incumbents' jobs.³³ The supervisory version asked the supervisor to rate the employee's job. The study supported the model in general. However, task significance was not a reliable core job dimension in Hong Kong, which suggests either national differences in the measurement of important job dimensions or cultural biases about work. Although research on the effectiveness of the JCM shows mixed results, one study comparing computer programmers and maintenance workers in China found that worker type helped explain differences.³⁴ In the study, the knowledge workers were more satisfied and performed better with enriched jobs compared with manual workers.

An alternative to the Job Characteristics Model is the Job Characteristics Inventory (JCI) developed by Henry Sims and Andrew Szilagyi.³⁵ The JCI primarily measures core job characteristics. It is not as comprehensive as the JDS or the new WDQ because it does not incorporate critical psychological states, personal and work outcomes, or employee needs. The JCI does give some consideration to structural and individual variables that affect the relationship between core job characteristics and the individual.³⁶ One comparative analysis of the JCI and JDS found similarities in the measures and in the models' predictions.³⁷ The comparative analysis also found two differences. First, the variety scales in the two models appear to have different effects on performance. Second, the autonomy scales in the two models appear to have different effects on employee satisfaction. Overall, the JCI, JDS, and new WDQ all support the usefulness of a person-job fit approach to the design of work over the earlier, universal theories.

Job Characteristics Model (JCM)

A framework for understanding person-job fit through the interaction of core job dimensions with critical psychological states within a person.

engagement

The expression of oneself as one performs in work or other roles.

Engagement

Psychological conditions related to job design features are a particular concern of the JCM.³⁸ One study of over 200 managers and employees in a Midwestern insurance company found that meaningfulness, safety, and availability were three important psychological conditions that affected employees' *engagement* in their jobs and work roles. Engagement at work is important for its positive individual and organizational outcomes. The Science feature shows the positive impact of job engagement on job performance and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Although important to company success, only one-third of employees in a recent study reported that they were engaged.³⁹ Engagement is the harnessing of organizational members to their work roles. When engaged, people employ and express themselves