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Construction Companies As Facilitators Of Satisfying Work Environments

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CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES AS FACILITATORS OF SATISFYING WORK ENVIRONMENTS

ABSTRACT

The turnover rate in the construction industry is high and must be slowed to meet the needs of an expanding and evolving workforce. Although turnover rates decreased by 6.6% from 62.2% in 2013 to 55.6% in 2015, it increased to 60.1% in 2017 (BLS 2018). At the same time, the construction industry is facing an increasing need to fulfill a workforce to design and build infrastructure and related projects. Over the past decade, both current and previous US presidents have supported proposals for advancing infrastructure and emphasized the need for a skilled future construction workforce (U.S. White House 2018). Due to the high turnover rate currently faced by industry during this time of increased growth, it is critical to understand what makes employees discontinue their employment in a construction company and potentially depart from the industry. Because positive work environments that promote professional development have been proven to reduce turnover, this study investigates construction employees' perceptions of professional development within these contexts. Findings from this study reveal nuanced employee descriptions and perceptions of professional development as well as positioning of company-as-facilitator of employee satisfaction through professional development.

KEYWORDS

Career Satisfaction, Professional Development, Career Choice, Career Advancement

INTRODUCTION

The US construction industry foresees increasing needs in both quality and quantity of human resources for future infrastructure projects. Workforce in the construction industry is predicted to require about 790,000 jobs between 2014 and 2024 (Henderson 2015). However, these needs in construction have not been satisfied; the number of quits in construction continuously increased and reached 8.0 million for five consecutive years by adding 2.0 million in 2018, thus partially offsetting the 20.9 million new hires in the same time period (BLS 2018). After one of the most critical economic downturns in 2008, many studies have sought to overcome this economic dilemma and recover from confounding effects of wage inequality and workforce wage polarization in to improve overall US industry employment rates (Autor et al. 2008). While the US employment rate and wage gaps have been significantly ameliorated, few studies examine construction workforce needs to understand work values of construction employees in order to increase the employment rate and improve career satisfaction in construction.

As the US industry encountered the needs in retaining the workforce, companies essentially clarified barriers to employment in order to boost the economy and industry. As part of a recruitment and retention strategy, many studies have investigated work values of employees that can influence their career paths and decisions to remain at or leave a company (Brown 2002; Bluestein 2006). These

studies examined employees' vocational values that employees perceived to be satisfied in the workplace. Through the investigation of vocational values and how they affected career satisfaction of employees, many theoretical frameworks and statements were introduced to help companies shape their organizational structures to fulfill employees' needs and values within and outside their careers. These values were further adapted to construction contexts to understand construction employees' values and career satisfaction (Author et al. 2018).

The complexity and uncertainty inherent to construction projects are key drivers pointing to the need to focus on Innovation and Growth Strategies as an engineering project organization grand challenge (Sakhrani et al. 2017). While this grand challenge is complex, it is achievable through research, policies, and practices that focus on business models and mechanisms that enable a culture of searching and learning, managing knowledge networks, and agile collaboration. The findings from this study inform organizational practices aimed at helping companies increase employee satisfaction and decrease turnover rates within a company. As it relates to the grand challenge, the findings are further translated to discuss initial – yet critical – steps towards creating workplace supports (i.e., mechanisms) for professional innovation and growth. By examining the relationship between employees' professional development and the role of a company as a facilitator, the construction industry can simultaneously foster improved productivity and project quality outcomes, enhance employee satisfaction, reduce turnover, and create mechanisms for innovation and growth.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizations cannot remain competitive if they are not able to attract and retain talented workers (Eversole et al. 2012), and emerging demographic shifts in the workforce are making this task more urgent and complex. Addressing this problem through additional research on the subject will provide more precise insights into the types of values that these demographics hold, particularly in spaces where the aspects of an individual's personal and professional life begin to intersect. Some of these key values include a sense of belonging and feelings of being needed, valued, understood, and important (Lawton and De Aquino 2015). Obtaining this level of clarity can shape the ways in which organizational leaders and managers understand employee workgroup interactions and further inform retention efforts with attention to employee work values.

Maslow's (1943) Theory is an important reminder that people are more than a collection of independent parts. As such, Maslow's hierarchy of needs is often used to study how and why humans intrinsically partake in behavioral motivation. The pyramid depiction of the hierarchy arranges people's motives in order of precedence, which is captured using five basic needs of man: 1) physiological, 2) safety, 3) love, 4) esteem, and 5) self-actualization. In his model, Maslow posited that people must be understood regarding their context, be it internal or external. Further, he identified that the ultimate goal of a person is to fulfill themselves as a creative, unique, individual according to their own innate possibilities and within the limits of reality. Therefore, examining work values can provide organizations with a clear understanding of the different individual and collective values attributed to employee

satisfaction, which can be used to design a workplace that accounts for these values that promote intentions to stay in the job and in a company.

Work values are defined as an objective, which includes a psychological state, a relationship, or material condition, that one seeks to attain. Values predict job satisfaction, career choice, work performance, workplace tenure, intentions to stay in the job, and vocational interests (Hansen and Leuty 2012). In an effort to address a lack of attention to ethnic and cultural minorities among career development theories, Brown (2002) proposed a career development theory based on values, namely work and cultural values (i.e., sets of shared values found in a particular cultural group). Specifically, Brown's theory was based on past research that established work values as a fundamental part of the career development process for underrepresented groups. At the same time, Brown alluded to the importance of other values that often interact with work values, which he termed as cultural values (2002). While Brown stressed cultural values, his work suggested that a number of variables may also be important when looking at career development and related issues of retention and recruitment beyond what we typically consider as "work-related".

Brown's Value-Based Theory of Occupational Choice, Satisfaction, and Success (Brown 2002) helps explain, predict, and understand the vocational choices of individuals. Although Brown's theory broadly examines career decision-making processes for individuals, it also constructs three overarching values (i.e., work, cultural, and life role values) that individuals prioritize when making a career decision, particularly when seeking employment at a company. In advancing the knowledge about "cultural neglect" and understanding individuals belonging to minority groups, Brown's theory encompasses factors such as socioeconomic status (SES), family influence, history of discrimination, gender, mental health, access to information, and self-efficacy as significant values that may influence individual's career choice and career satisfaction.

Based on Brown's theory, work values are defined as values that "individuals believe should be satisfied as a result of their participation in the work role" (Brown 2002) and include career advancement, professional development, salary, and number of work hours. For example, individuals who set higher priorities on work values in their lives tend to highlight making achievements and accomplishments that can be attained through their job or career. Cultural values are values that an individual achieves through interpersonal interactions and engagement with social structures, both within and outside the workplace. For example, an individual may want to achieve collective social values by having a "family-like" working environment over individualistic work values such as getting a promotion. Lastly, life role values comprise the valued roles that an individual maintains throughout one's life within a variety of social contexts. For example, Harpaz and Fu (1997) identified gender as a limiting factor in career decisions, suggesting that women maintain stronger orientations toward life roles, such as participating in the family, and less on work values. Although this reference may be somewhat antiquated, it supports to encapsulate various life role values that individuals may relate indirectly to determining career choice. Notably, Brown finds that cultural and life values tend to overlap because of their identical characteristics of interpersonal relationships and social constructs.

This study focuses on the possible influence of professional development on work as shaped by these values. Specifically, this study examines how construction employees describe and ascribe value to professional development within their particular companies and illuminates companies' roles in shaping these perceptions within their work environments. Through this study, construction companies can better understand employees' value of professional development and how to facilitate a satisfying work environment. Therefore, the two research questions that guide this study are:

1. How do professional employees in construction describe professional development?
2. How do construction companies shape these descriptions?

PRIOR WORK

Prior work has been conducted to develop a comprehensive overview of values that individuals desire in a workplace. Brown's Value-Based Theory (Brown 2002) was selected to be a guiding theoretical framework and was further redeveloped to contextualize professional values that construction employees prioritize when seeking employment at a company (Author et al. 2019). One result of this prior work was that the three values of Brown's theory (i.e., work, cultural and life role values) were renamed as professional work value, professional cultural value, and professional work-life balance value to capture and emphasize the various values within and outside of professional organizational context (i.e., company). For example, professional work value comprised of an individual's intrapersonal values that one believes should be satisfied through a work role at a professional organization (e.g., gaining increases in salary, having flexibility in work schedule, getting various opportunities of professional development). Professional cultural value included the individual's interpersonal values that one believes should be satisfied by interactions or involvement within a professional organization (e.g., feeling a sense of belonging with coworkers and effective communication). Professional work-life balance value consisted of the combined inter- and intrapersonal values that one manages to balance personal life with professional life (e.g., taking time off to go on vacation with family).

With three redeveloped professional values from Brown's theory, the prior study helped to better understand the complex interrelations among values and established the values that individuals desired most within and outside a professional organization. As this primary investigation further narrowed Brown's theory, professional development was found to be one of the significant professional work values that workers desired and expected as a result of their employment at their professional organization. For an in-depth discussion of findings and analysis procedures from this study, see Author et al. (2019).

METHODS

The study discussed herein is part of a larger investigation seeking to characterize the work values of construction professionals and identify work environments that promote these values (Author et al. 2018). A survey was distributed to construction

professionals from 37 companies in the United States that composed of 27 rate, rank, text-entry, and open-response questions. The research team coded responses from a total of 314 participants and analyzed the values they perceived to be lacking and satisfied through employment at their current company. Survey participants ranged from Senior Superintendent to Vice President. Each of the two open-response questions examined in the prior study was analyzed to address a specific research question. The first question, “What one thing would you change about your current company?” attempted to find values that participants felt their company was currently lacking. The second question, “What drew you to seek employment at your current company?” was designed to pinpoint key values that attracted/retained them to seek employment at the current company. Key findings from the larger study revealed that while professional development was a key factor in drawing professionals to their current organizations, they often perceived professional development opportunities as lacking in their current work environment.

In this study, to better understand these previous findings and answer the aforementioned research questions, the responses from open-ended questions were further analyzed based on participants’ descriptions of professional development. Open-ended responses from the participants were scrutinized by using inductive qualitative analyses (Charmaz 2014; Thomas 2006) due to the participants’ emergent descriptions of professional development. While examining the participants’ descriptions of professional development, two distinct viewpoints of achieving professional development were observed and categorized based on the codes that were developed as part of the larger investigation (Author et al. 2019). To ensure research quality in the qualitative categorization process, the research team met periodically to discuss and clarify the meanings of participants’ responses. This process helped the research team to avoid adding and making extraneous assumptions to the responses and promoted credibility of interpretations and characterizations of employees’ perceptions of professional development. Categories were discussed and checked with participant descriptions. During this process, some responses were double-coded to capture respondents’ overlapping descriptions; therefore, the number of codes identified in each response was greater than the total number of responses

RESULTS

As previously described by Author et al. (2019), ‘Professional development’ was identified as a key professional work value along with ‘Communication’ and ‘Reputation,’ which had the most responses in open-ended Questions 1 and 2, respectively. In fact, of the 314 total respondents, ‘professional development’ was the second most prevalent responses for both open-ended questions: 16 (7%) and 39 (11%). Although these numbers indicate the number of responses that included a direct notation and/or an indirect implication of professional development, findings from this study revealed a multi-faceted description of professional development. In addition to ‘Professional development,’ codes such as ‘Training and mentoring,’ ‘Creativity in work,’ and ‘Acknowledgement’ were also analyzed to better understand participants’ descriptions of professional development. That is, the research team not only investigated professional development based on the responses specifically coded as ‘Professional development’ but also examined other related codes, based on

Brown's initial framework, and expanded its scope to fully understand the characteristics of professional development.

Some participants defined professional development as opportunities for advancement through structured programs and having authorship and agency in work and career advancement (Author et al. 2019). For example, one participant stated, "I would want my company to be more organized with our development programs. We do a poor job of outlining what the progression will be for our employees. Often times we string employees along until we absolutely have to do something." Participants also described professional development not only as developing a technical aspect of their career, but also as acquiring a work ethic, assuming professional responsibility, and promoting their identities as professionals in their fields. Specifically, professional development was described as being synonymous with a satisfying work environment and characterized as providing employees with opportunities for professional growth, social status, and acknowledgement.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT = SATISFYING WORK ENVIRONMENT

1. Professional growth

Participants described making their career choice based on the types of opportunities they anticipated would be provided via employment at a particular company. Participants described an eagerness to progress in their career by advancing their professional skills. Also, they sought to evaluate themselves by proactively self-examining their skills and abilities in their work and improving those that were lacking. Some participants expected or desired training to be provided by or through their company as one participant desired to see a "... more structured approach to talent[professional] development" at a current company. Other participants described professional development as self-provided that allows them to take unique experiences to different types and locations of projects regardless of the size or reputation of the company. These participants seemed more adventurous and creative than the others in terms of their proactive approach to professional development.

2. Social Status

Participants perceived their work as an integrated facet of their lives (Bluestein 2006) and developed a work role as part of their social status. That is, they valued being employed at a reputable company; the name value and reputation of the company also influenced employees' perceived self-success, satisfaction from their careers, and potential for career advancement.

3. Acknowledgement

Participants also indicated that they evaluated their work performance based on the acknowledgement they received from others. For example, a participant stated a reason for his employment at the current company that "[t]he company makes you feel like one of their own and goes beyond the norm to make your career here matter." These participants explained that they wanted to be acknowledged for their work and involved in a company that promoted a feeling of professional belongingness in this way.

COMPANY ROLE = FACILITATING A SATISFYING WORK ENVIRONMENT

While some participants sought employment at a company where they can make great contributions to projects and be acknowledged for their work, others sought employment at a company that they perceived as providing better opportunities and benefits. These responses illustrated two ways a company could create a satisfying work environment: 1) providing opportunities for professional development and 2) providing opportunities to expand social networks.

1. Provide an environment and opportunities for obtaining, exhibiting and practicing professional skills.

Participants described their desired work environment as a platform for effectively acquiring and contributing professional skills. Companies affording such opportunities were perceived by participants as providing opportunities and benefits that allowed them to be professionally competitive in their career and empowered to make career decisions. For example, one of the participants described that the role of a company is, “to ensure everyone has the tools needed to complete [the] job at hand.” The participant emphasized that employees seek employment at a company where they can practice their professional skills with competent tools to effectively complete the tasks.

Such participants also perceived having some control over the location of project and project type. In other words, participants desired a work environment where they could be productive and proactive in their work roles. In particular, a participant expressed a desire to have different “opportunity[ies] to try different positions.”

In particular, a participant illustrated the role of company in terms of, “ensuring career development and subsequent compensation is at or better than the industry standard in order to attract the best people.” That is, the role of company is also perceived as a platform to practice professional skills that they have acquired through experience. The participants the learning and practicing professional skills can be

2. Provide opportunities for expanding professional social networks both within and outside their fields

Participants described the importance of relationship-building and networking that can advance their professional career paths in the future. Specifically, participants valued work environments that promote a family-like atmosphere within a company and facilitate interaction between co-workers. Such environments, the participants explained, would also support discussions of their future career decisions.

When describing the role of the company in facilitating a satisfying work environment, participants particularly described company-sponsored opportunities that allow the employee to have a desire to work at a company that provides opportunities and benefits for professional development. The opportunities and benefits include being involved in an overseas project and learning about innovative technology for their career advancement. These opportunities and benefits provide employees with unique experiences and newest information to be competitive in the construction industry.

Additionally, participants illustrated professional development as not only getting employment at a company that provides various opportunities and benefits but also

making professional accomplishments through employment at a company they can better contribute. That is, the participant extended the meaning of professional development from passively getting provided with opportunities and benefits to actively making contributions through employment at a company. The research team found that while passive professional development provides professional skills and knowledge, active professional development at a company utilizes employees' professional development, thus rewards career satisfaction through their professional accomplishments, as shown in Figure 1.

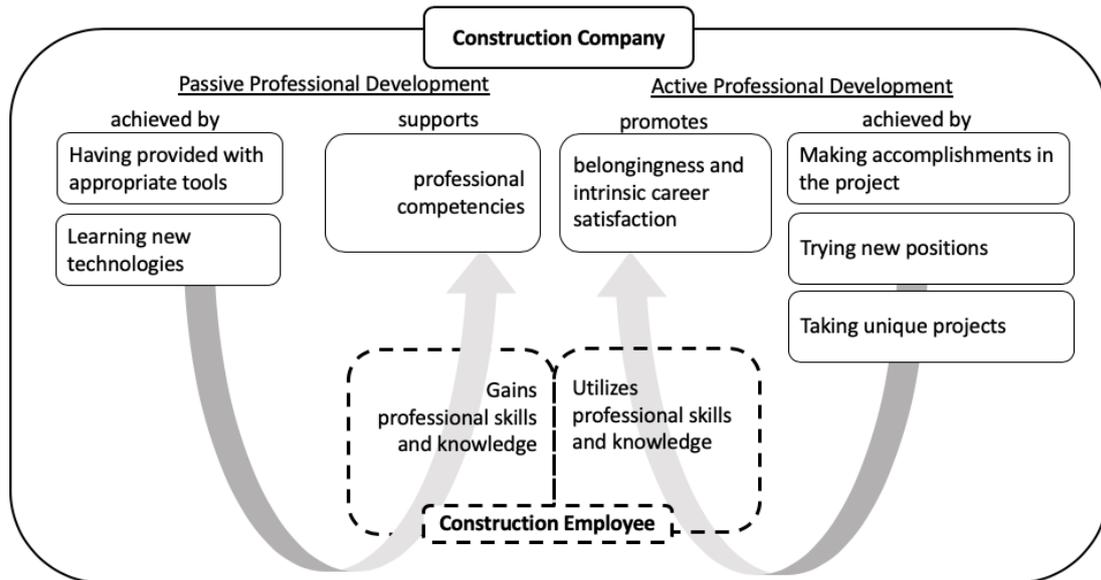


Figure 1. Relationship of Employee and Company as a Facilitator

Although this study does not intend to characterize professional development into extreme scenarios, Figure 1 helps to understand the employees' needs and desires for the professional development of construction company. While each employee has different values to be satisfied through their careers, the study found characteristics supporting two types of professional developments: active and passive.

While the significant outcomes of active and passive professional development are illustrated in distinct loops, they are not mutually exclusive. For example, while professional competencies are shown as gained by construction employees in a loop of passive professional development, professional competencies can also be acquired through active professional development. In the same way, employees may feel a sense of belongingness through passive professional development as well. However, these loops are demonstrated to emphasize the significant outcomes that each professional development can execute. Therefore, this diagram serves to highlight the key attributes that each professional development may deliver as a result.

ACTIVE/PASSIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF PERCEIVED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Passive professional development

Passive professional development was characterized and categorized by participants' viewpoints of gaining professional development. These types of passive professional development can be exemplified as getting provided with training and mentoring,

learning about new technologies, and having the right tools and equipment. Participants who described professional development as part of gaining and acquiring process accentuated learning new technology or computer program to be more competent than other employees, and essentially advance in career. That is, construction employees' perceived and desired an organizational platform within a company that helps them to be professionally competent through passive professional development which they can gain knowledge and skills from.

Active professional development

On the other hand, active professional development was particularly observed from employees who tend to be more progressive and active in seeking professional development opportunities. These participants stated professional development as making accomplishments through their work roles and feeling acknowledgments for their contributions at the workplace. For example, one of the participants particularly sought for a company that provided, a “[g]reat opportunity to learn and experience a mixture of engineering and business.” Noting the importance of getting opportunities of blend experience at the workplace, the participant added that, “[y]ou can make a bigger difference and have a bigger impact on a smaller company... It gives you a greater sense of accomplishment.” While this participant demonstrated preference of working at a smaller company, it was evident that the participant specifically sought a platform to influence and make changes within a company. Therefore, active professional development was perceived and described as an organizational platform that allows employees to make accomplishments and receive acknowledgments and a sense of belongingness within a company.

DISCUSSION

As previously described, professional development was a primary factor that influenced construction employees' career choice, particularly as they sought companies that provided opportunities for or were perceived to value professional development. In particular, the present study found that there are different roles in which the company may serve as a facilitator, which may be engaged in either actively, passively, or a combination of both by employees.

The study found that construction employees seek to find a company that fulfills either their extrinsic (i.e., external) and intrinsic (i.e., internal) expectations and needs. Because each employee has different perspectives in obtaining career satisfaction, the construction company has to establish platforms to facilitate employees' professional development by providing sufficient company-sponsored opportunities and by demanding professional contributions from employees. These findings highlight employees' perceptions of professional development and the company's role in fostering professional development.

SIGNIFICANCE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Career satisfaction is an individual pursuit that an organization can satisfy through environmental support and resources variables (Lent and Brown 2006). In this study, for example, career satisfaction for some employees is evaluated by extrinsic rewards such as getting higher salaries and having a more flexible work schedule. Other employees, however, attained career satisfaction through extrinsic rewards such as

making contributions to projects and feeling respected and acknowledged for their accomplishments. While it is apparent that many employees seek a company with greater extrinsic rewards, less or minimal attention to intrinsic rewards has been gathered to fulfill the needs of employees' professional development. Therefore, to better satisfy employees' different needs in professional development, which may essentially promote career satisfaction, implementation of a structured system to provide intrinsic rewards (i.e., facilitating professional development of employees) is necessary.

EMPLOYEES' DIFFERENT EXPECTATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Findings also revealed that the perceived professional development sought by construction employees varied based on their expectations from the company. For instance, while the research team anticipated that making contributions and achieving accomplishments would be solely observed from experienced professionals, it was not necessarily true for some employees. Participants with adventurous and progressive traits wanted to achieve professional development not only through professional training sponsored by the company but also through unique experiences such as being involved in overseas and high-profile projects and trying different positions. That is, the participants had different expectations of professional development opportunities for achieving career satisfaction. However, in most cases, more experienced employees tended to take active approaches of professional development whereas less experienced employees, who did not necessarily know what types of opportunities were available or were undecided in pursuing opportunities, tended to favor passive approaches to professional development.

TYPICAL ACTIVE APPROACHES TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

An example of active approaches to professional development can be illustrated as employees' behavior in seeking opportunities to travel around in order to be professionally competitive with other employees as advance in their career. This study found that participants sought a company that provides opportunities to travel and be involved in distant projects. A participant lamented not getting as many travel opportunities as other colleagues at larger, different companies, stating that, [b]eing a young individual sometimes I wish I had joined a larger company that I would have gotten to travel or move around some with ... I miss getting to travel to places like some of my other friends have." In this statement, the participant illustrated that their professional development could be better achieved through employment at a larger company that provides more opportunities for travel. As described by the participant, a larger company is perceived as providing more opportunities for being involved in distant projects.

However, getting employment at a larger company did not necessarily reflect all employees' active professional development expectations. A participant explained that employment at their current company was stimulated by challenging one's capability of professional growth. In particular, the participant envisioned an "[o]ppportunity to start a company (division) from scratch ...[t]o prove to myself I could do it and be successful." Another participant had a similar response and demonstrated entrepreneurship by challenging oneself to accept an "opportunity to "step-up" and work on large-scale heavy-highway projects." Therefore, these

responses revealed that active professional development could still be accomplished, regardless of the size of the company.

TYPICAL PASSIVE APPROACHES TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As noted earlier, the opportunities for passive professional development are more sought by the new employees who want to be better prepared for the work and desire to be competent professionals. One of the participants sought a company that, “[p]rovide[s] initial job training for entry level employees,” and added that a company needs, “[a] new process to ensure everyone has the tools needed to complete job at hand.” Meaning, passive professional development opportunities for new employees are particularly significant to reduce the time spent on teaching about the tasks in order to maximize the efficiency and productivity of the work. In short, A construction employee seeks for a company that gives various opportunities to advance their professional skills. These opportunities include enhancing their professional networks and learning about new technologies. By gaining professional experience, employees believe they can be more competitive in the industry and advance their career path.

Once the employees are satisfied with their (skills), they evaluate themselves to see if they fit with the current position and company. If they perceive themselves as more competent and productive in another position or at another company, they become more active and instead seeks a platform to test and practice the earned skills. A platform may be a job title and a different company in search of an employee with experience and ability to exploit professional achievements. However, the self-evaluation does not always lead an employee to make a transition. If a company provides a platform to utilize skills they have acquired either through career experience or opportunities that the company provides, then they choose to remain at the same company.

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

While there are many other reasons that lead the employees to remain at the same company such as family-like environment and high salaries, the primary reason for making a career decision varies by different perceptions and values of career satisfaction. That is, career satisfaction is more complex than it is perceived. While individualistic approaches to career satisfaction may influence construction employees’ future career decision, construction companies can satisfy these needs through strategic structure and operationalization of professional development. Company’s role as facilitating professional development can strengthen employees’ identities as professionals and bolster the growth of the company and industry as a whole.

As noted previously in this paper, the size of the company is generally perceived to influence the number of opportunities and quality of professional development at a company. A participant shared an experience working at different sizes of company and stated that “I originally work[ed] for a small company that did not have any room for advancement,” and conversely appreciated about having a greater professional development opportunity at a larger company that, “[w]ith this company I've been able to advance both in job title and pay. Also, being involved in larger[sic] projects by working at a larger company and being involved in a unique project.” On the other

hand, a participant described that it is not really about the size of the company, stating, "...[w]hen I began my career it was then a large company but was operated more like a smaller company and it had the feel of working for a small family company." This participant emphasized that the feel of belongingness could also be captured at a larger company. However, the participant wistfully but admittedly continued explaining about how the sense of belongingness diminished recently, "[o]ver the last 5 years or so, I feel the company has more of a corporatized, un-intimate feel. I realize that this is a necessary evil with growth, but this is one thing that I would change." As illustrated in the participants' responses, a larger company is usually perceived as better at providing a variety of opportunities whereas a smaller company as better at providing greater employee relationships and belongingness at a company by establishing a platform for employees to contribute and to have authorship in work.

This study supports a claim that construction companies should carry these strengths of active and passive professional development opportunities. By providing a variety of opportunities of professional development by establishing a working environment to gain and utilize the learnings and skills at a company, construction companies can simultaneously attract and retain the prospective and current employees

CONCLUSION

As a result of this exploratory study, it was identified that participants perceived opportunities for professional development as a key characteristic within their work environments that bolstered their career satisfaction. Within this study, participants also described these professional development opportunities in two ways -- categorized as active and passive -- that positioned companies within a facilitator/mediator role. Active pursuits of professional development captured an individual's preference to proactively and ardently engage in their companies to apply their learned skills and contribute to projects, despite a company's lack of formal training opportunities. These individuals described professional development as a guiding principle and took it upon themselves to seek out and identify opportunities that would align with their overall career goals. Passive pursuits of professional development captured an individual's preference to hone their skills and gain knowledge through formal or structured opportunities organized by the company, which may or may not be aligned with their overall career goals.

Drawing from these findings, companies are positioned, or can position themselves, as facilitators of different types of professional development opportunities for different individuals. Not only should companies develop structured professional development training and programs, but also consider an alternative, less formal ways to promote professional development and promote career satisfaction among employees. Creating a work environment that promotes exploration through varied experience (e.g., allowing employees to work on different projects to broaden their skillset) is just one way that a company can facilitate more inherent and informal opportunities for professional development. Finally, these findings also inform strategies for creating workplace supports for innovation and growth. Fundamental to achieving the innovation and growth grand challenge is a work environment that enables a culture focused on this outcome. In a similar way as understanding employee value of professional development was linked to a satisfying work

environment, there is a connection between human behavior and organizational culture of innovative companies. As such, professional development training and programs do not need to be generally interpreted and applied across companies. Rather, a company can serve as a facilitator that strategically utilizes professional development as a multifaceted tool to address needs and promote career satisfaction of employees.

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