

Abstract

This bachelor thesis analyses how perceived meaning influences child performance, mood and enjoyment when performing work-related tasks. In laboratory settings, I manipulated the level of perceived meaning that was given for completion of an easy repetitive assignment by three different treatments. In the “Recognized” condition, each completed task was awarded with verbal recognition. The experimenter in the “Ignored” condition did not care about completed work. In the “Shredded” condition, the finished task was left not only unchecked, but it was destroyed immediately after submission. I observed a strong positive relationship between how “nice” experimenter behaved and how many tasks children finished. The same held for how good children felt. In general, even small acknowledgment mattered more than the demotivating procedure, but there were some gender-specific differences. Specifically, recognition played an important role for boys. On the contrary, destroying of completed tasks had a major negative effect on girls. These aspects significantly impacted both, performance as well as mood.

Keywords

Perceived meaning, Meaningful work, Futile work, Experimental investigation, Children