

**Job satisfaction and on-the-job search:
A theoretical and empirical approach**

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Since Freeman's (1978) work, the economic literature has consistently found job (dis)satisfaction a good predictor of effective labour mobility (quits). Furthermore, there exists some evidence confirming the negative correlation of job satisfaction with potential mobility (i.e. intentions to quit). To the best of our knowledge, academics interested in job satisfaction have paid little attention to on-the-job search, one of the most objective forms of potential mobility. This neglect is not exclusive to this research stream but is typical in the general economics literature, in which job search has usually focussed on the unemployed. This article presents an on-the-job search theoretical model based on intertemporal utility from work maximisation. The theoretical framework notably allows us to nest other on-the-job search models, based either on labour income maximization (Burdett, 1978) or on total labour remuneration maximization (Akerlof. et al., 1988). The model's main results consist of the derivation of two reservation utility levels, instead of wage levels. These results allow us to link on-the-job search to job satisfaction judgements. The theoretical model is empirically tested using a Spanish large-scale survey of quality of life at work (Encuesta de Calidad de Vida en el Trabajo, 1999) conducted by the Spanish Labour Ministry.