



A Study on the Job Engagement of Company Employees

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Abstract

Purpose The present paper, based on relative studies done both at home and abroad, intends to investigate the relationships between individual characteristics of the employees in the company and their job engagement. **Methodology** by using the UWES (Utrecht Work Engagement Scale) **Result** The relevance between company employees' individual characteristics and the variables of job engagement is significant. The regression analysis further finds out that the regression is significant between company employees' individual characteristics and the dimensions (vigor, dedication, and absorption) of job engagement. In addition, gender and length of working can predict the degree of employees' engagement into working. **Conclusion** employees' individual characteristics studied in the present paper have an effect on their job engagement.

Keywords: Job engagement, Vigor, Dedication, Absorption

With the development of Positive Psychology and Positive Organizational Behavior, the long-ignored human virtues, such as the strength and positivity of the members in an organization, and positive mental abilities are attracting more and more attention. Within this context, job engagement, as the opposite of job disengagement, becomes the new research focus of scholars.

Kahn (1990) puts forward the concept of "personal engagement" for the first time. And he defines personal engagement as the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles (Kahn, 1990: 694). From the point of view of Kahn, self and work role exist in some dynamic and negotiable relation: when engaged deeper in his or her job, a person both drives personal energies into role behaviors (self-employment) and displays the self within the role (self-expression); in the opposite condition, the individual uncouples self from role, avoids creating job achievement, and displays an evacuation from role obligations. Scholars, such as Schaufeli, extend Kahn's concept of job engagement in another way. They define job engagement as a full state with persistent and positive moods and motivations, with vigor, dedication, and absorption as its major features.

Based on studies done both at home and abroad, the present author attempts to investigate the effect of employees' individual characteristics on their job engagement.

1. Subjects and Methods

1.1 Subjects

The current study selected 300 employees randomly from three companies to fill in the questionnaires. 248 questionnaires were recovered, reaching a response rate of 83%. Among the three companies one is located in the urban area, and the other two are from the countryside. Of all the employees, 182 were male ones, occupying 52%; and 118 female employees, with a percentage of 48%.

1.2 Instruments

The measurement of job engagement was conducted with the UWES (Utrecht work engagement scale), which was designed by Schaufeli. The scale involves three factors: vigor, dedication, and absorption. Zhang Yiwen, a scholar in China, has proved that the UWES deserves a high degree of reliability and validity.

1.3 Data analysis

SPSS 11.5 was used for analyzing the data in the present study.

2. Results

2.1 The differences in job engagement between the employees in company with different characteristics

First of all, a comparison was done to reveal the differences in job engagement between employees with different characteristics. The compound analysis ($2 \times 2 \times 6$) was used for analyzing the three factors: gender, marital status, and length of working (see Table 1).

Insert Table 1 here

Table 1 shows that the difference between male and female employees in their job engagement is manifested mainly on the dimension of dedication. The interaction between gender and marital status has a significant difference in the dimensions of vigor and dedication of job engagement.

2.2 The differences in job engagement between male and female company employees

A further investigation of the scores gained by male and female employees in their job engagement shows that male employees have higher scores over female ones on the dimension of vigor and absorption while female employees gain more scores than male ones on the dimension of dedication.

Insert Table 2 here

2.3 The differences in job engagement between company employees with different marital status

From the above analysis, it can be seen that the interaction between company employees' gender and their marital status has a significant difference in the dimensions of vigor and dedication of job engagement. A further analysis of the scores gained by company employees in their job engagement on the three dimensions shows: unmarried employees have higher scores than those married ones on all the three dimensions of job engagement, esp. on the dimensions of vigor and dedication.

Insert Table 3 here

2.4 The differences in job engagement between company employees with different length of working

A further analysis of the scores gained by the employees in the company of different length of working shows that company employees with 0~5 years of working gain the highest scores on all the three dimensions. However, there is a fall in the job engagement of employees who have a length of 6~10 years of working experience. And there is a rise in job engagement of employees with 11~15 years of working. Employees who have 16~20 years of working experience gain the lowest scores on the dimensions of dedication and absorption.

Insert Table 4 here

3. Discussions

The results of the present study show that there exist differences in job engagement between male and female employees in the company, esp. on the dimension of dedication. Female employees value more their jobs than male ones. Male employees gain higher scores on the dimensions of vigor and absorption than female ones, which can be partly explained by the fact that men are generally more vigorous than women.

Unmarried employees gain higher scores than married employees on all the three dimensions, which may be explained by the fact that unmarried employees have more time and energy to spend on job. Generally speaking, due to having a short time in working, male employees feel refreshed when they work, and this will strengthen their engagement in working.

Employees with a length of working for 0~5 years gain higher scores than those in other groups in job engagement on all the three dimensions. Usually, the employees who have just begun working have a fresh feeling towards their job, and are full of energy. There appears a fall in job engagement of employees with a length of working for 6~10 years. The two possible reasons: one is that they feel a bit tired after a period of high-engagement into working; another reason is that employees in this group have established their own families, which makes them distribute part of their energy into their families. Thus, it is understandable that there appears a fall in their job engagement. Then, a rise appears in job engagement of the employees. On the whole, after 6 years of working, there will appear a fall-rise curve in the job engagement of company employees.

4. Conclusions and Implications

Through the analysis of the job engagement of 248 employees from the three factories, the present study draws the following conclusions:

(1) Female employees dedicate significantly more than male employees in their job engagement. Create reasonable

atmosphere and conditions for employees, make them involved in job and experience success and happiness, thus to make them more devoted into working.

(2) The strength of unmarried employees' full of energy and deep engagement into working should be made good use of. Efforts should be made to create a harmonious human relationships and a good cultural atmosphere in factory. In addition, the job engagement of married employees should be strengthened.

(3) High pertinence should be strengthened according to the different length of working of the employees. The construction of company culture should be favorable for relieving the tiredness and pressure of working for the employees, so as to make them more dedicated into working.

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Table 1. The compound analysis of the job engagement of company employees with different gender, marital status and length of working

Source of variance	vigor	dedication	absorption
gender	1.249	4.138*	1.214
marital status	0.297	0.028	0.005
length of working	0.306	0.559	1.225
gender × marital status	4.097*	5.301*	2.690
gender × marital status	1.373	2.087	2.152
marital status × length of working	0.432	0.620	1.099
gender×marital status×length of working	0.789	0.379	0.013

Notes: "×" stands for the interaction; * $p < 0.05$

Table 2. A comparison of job engagement between male and female employees

	Male employees M (SD)	Female employees M (SD)
vigor	29.17(6.72)	27.89 (6.91)
dedication	24.92(6.79)	25.32 (6.19)
absorption	25.28(5.70)	25.09 (5.53)

Table 3. A comparison of job engagement between employees of different marital status

	Unmarried employees M (SD)	Married employees M (SD)
vigor	29.53(7.32)	28.40(6.77)
dedication	25.69(6.48)	24.93(6.61)
absorption	25.33(5.17)	25.18(5.73)

Table 4. A comparison of job engagement between employees of different length of working

	vigor M (SD)	dedication M (SD)	absorption M (SD)
0—5 years (group1)	30.00(6.22)	26.58(5.89)	26.02(5.25)
6—10 years (group2)	27.84(7.50)	24.48(7.17)	25.03(5.92)
11—15 years (group 3)	28.28(6.53)	25.46(6.52)	25.26(5.29)
16—20 years (group 4)	28.31(7.55)	23.69(6.21)	24.25(6.73)
21—25 years (group 5)	29.00(6.10)	24.42(7.40)	25.53(6.26)
over 25 years (group 6)	28.57(7.41)	25.14(6.43)	25.07(4.94)