

Volume 17, Number 2

ISSN 2150-5187

**Allied Academies
International Conference**

**Las Vegas, Nevada
October 10-13, 2012**

**Academy of Organizational Culture,
Communication and Conflict**

PROCEEDINGS

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Table of Contents

EXPECTATIONS AND PROFIT: SMALL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT 1
 Karra Overholt, Indiana Wesleyan University
 Breanna Wilson, Indiana Wesleyan University
 Adam Sharrard, Indiana Wesleyan University
 Austin Doerr, Indiana Wesleyan University

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT ON ORGANIZATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY: THE MODERATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT 5
 Simone T. A. Phipps, Macon State College
 Leon C. Prieto, Clayton State University
 Erastus N. Ndinguri, Louisiana State University

**THE INNER CIRCLE:
HOW POLITICS AFFECTS THE ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE..... 7**
 Edgar Rogelio Ramírez Solís, Tecnológico de Monterrey
 Verónica Ilián Baños Monroy, Tecnológico de Monterrey
 Margarita Orozco-Gómez, Tecnológico de Monterrey

VIRTUAL WORLDS AND THE DIGITAL CITIZEN: UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF VIRTUAL REALITY ON TEACHER PREPARATION RESEARCH..... 9
 Ingrad Smith, Jackson State University

THE NEW WORK CONTRACT: MITIGATING THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON WORK ATTITUDES 11
 Wendy J. Walker, North Georgia College and State University

CUSTODIANS OF THE FUTURE: A MINDSET FOR GLOBAL CHANGES..... 13
 Paul Kuffel, Regent University

DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN A LEADER AND FOLLOWERS TEND TO INHIBIT LEADER-FOLLOWER EXCHANGE (LMX) LEVELS AND JOB SATISFACTION..... 15
 Teddie E. Malangwasira, Regent University

EXPECTATIONS AND PROFIT: SMALL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

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Breanna Wilson, Indiana Wesleyan University
Adam Sharrard, Indiana Wesleyan University
Austin Doerr, Indiana Wesleyan University

ABSTRACT

While income and expectations typically go hand-in-hand there are organizational culture differences that can set small business managers up for disappointment. While it is important to have big dreams, our research shows the importance of having a seed of reality. As expectations increase so does income and dissatisfaction. We suggest that more research examine Jaques's equity theory among samples of small business owners and employees in developing countries.

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UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT ON ORGANIZATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY: THE MODERATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

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ABSTRACT

Organizational culture plays an important role in the growth and development of an organization, and can substantially impact organizational performance. There are many elements that can reflect the “soul” of an organization’s culture, and one such element is the extent to which employees are granted the opportunity to participate in the direction of their organization. This paper will explore this element by investigating the relationship between employee involvement (EI) and organizational productivity (OP), the latter being a form of organizational performance. The possible moderating effect of organizational commitment (OC) will also be considered. The four employee involvement elements (power, information, knowledge/skills, and rewards) will be examined, and propositions will be provided concerning the influence of these elements on organizational productivity, and the interaction between these elements and organizational commitment that affects organizational productivity. A conceptual model, implications, and suggestions for future inquiry will also be presented.

Keywords: employee involvement, organizational commitment, productivity

THE INNER CIRCLE: HOW POLITICS AFFECTS THE ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE

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ABSTRACT

What is the relationship between the organizational politics and the climate the firm? The main objective of this paper is to identify the kind of organizational politics that affects the most the organizational climate in the shoe manufacturing companies of Jalisco, Mexico. We designed a survey and applied it in 134 companies in this industrial sector. Our focus was in the personal relationships established by the firms, all of them members of the Chamber of the Shoe Manufacturers in Jalisco State.

The results of our empirical research indicate that the study of the perception of organizational politics is a topic of major importance and most of the time an overlooked issue in organizational culture and conflict management models.

Keywords: Organizational politics; organizational climate; organizational culture.

Purpose: The purpose of this article is to determine (if there is any) the influence of organizational politics in the organizational climate measured in the SME's of the shoe making industry of the state of Jalisco, Mexico.

Design/methodology/approach: An empirical study of 134 companies indicated an interesting relationship between organizational politics and some climate factors, but not in a negative way.

Findings: Unlike many authors expect (and a lot of practitioners) some organizational politics could represent a new instrument to achieve a better organizational climate.

Research limitations/implications: The results will help to reinforce the view that some organizational politics factors could be dangerous for the organizational climate, but also some of the tactics may be beneficial for a company.

Practical implications: This study provides interesting managerial implications on how to take advantage of a common behavior: the self-organization of employees in order to get what they want. Politics should not be seen as a dysfunctional or aberrant behavior.

Originality/value: Researchers commonly view organizational politics as a barrier to a good performance of the employees within a firm. The underlying idea is that people only do politics to get a benefit for them; instead of which, in this article the authors showed that the employees play politics and obtain a good organizational climate at the same time. Organizational politics could be considered as the "missing link" in organizational studies. The Perception of Politic Scale (POPS) has been used widely in United States or Canada but not in Mexico.

Acknowledgements: The authors acknowledge the support received from Tecnológico de Monterrey to carry out the research reported in this article.

VIRTUAL WORLDS AND THE DIGITAL CITIZEN: UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF VIRTUAL REALITY ON TEACHER PREPARATION RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

Effective teacher training can no longer occur in one dimensional terms. The swiftness of knowledge takes place expeditiously; teacher preparation through professional development activities in real time cannot compete with the momentum of artificial intelligence found in video games in virtual environments. Since repetition is necessary to gain a degree of competency of specific skills, pre service teachers must be taught to use virtual programs to master specific classroom proficiency to maintain the interest of digital minded students who have the ability to grasp information through multidimensional images. This article will expose teachers to acquired knowledge and intellectual proficiency through computer-generated programs designed to provide concrete experiences in a virtual environment.

THE NEW WORK CONTRACT: MITIGATING THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON WORK ATTITUDES

Wendy J. Walker, North Georgia College and State University

ABSTRACT

Psychological contracts in today's workforce continue to evolve from those that are more relational to those that are more transactional. However, highly transactional contracts tend to be negatively related to workplace attitudinal outcomes. Given both the increasing pervasiveness and the potential negative effects of transactional contracts, it is important to understand how to reduce their negative effects on work attitudes. Career motivation and person-organization fit were proposed to moderate these relationships. Data from 302 survey respondents working full-time in a variety of job types show that person-organization fit indeed significantly limits the negative effects on work attitudes.

Keywords:

Psychological contract; person-organization fit; job satisfaction; organizational commitment

CUSTODIANS OF THE FUTURE: A MINDSET FOR GLOBAL CHANGES

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ABSTRACT

This paper is intended to spur the need for awareness for mindset change in organizational leadership by looking at some of the challenges organizations face in meeting global challenges. It focuses on the need for organizational leaders to look beyond today and shift the domestic or local mindset to a more globally centered outlook as part of a continued change process. It specifically addresses the need for leaders to embrace clear communication as a tool for generating cooperative and collaborative work attitudes among stakeholders. For leaders to be effective, they need to support technology as a force necessary for increasing globalization and be able to recognize diversity as a necessity for success in a global market. While all of these aspects of mindset change are interrelated, clear communication remains the overarching theme in the organizational change process helping leaders meet the demands of the future in a global world.

DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN A LEADER AND FOLLOWERS TEND TO INHIBIT LEADER-FOLLOWER EXCHANGE (LMX) LEVELS AND JOB SATISFACTION

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ABSTRACT

This quantitative study explores whether demographic differences between a leader and follower are negatively related to the leader-follower exchange (LMX) levels and job satisfaction. The demographic character differences primarily focused on differences in age, gender, tenure, and educational qualification. Results of the research support the notion that dissimilarity leads to: (a) poor quality of exchange which in turn affects job satisfaction of the employees due to repulsion because people tend to be drawn to those who are comparable to them; (b) low communication between the members of a dyad; (c) high role ambiguity; (d) differences in attitudes, values, and beliefs; and (e) high role conflict because the dyad members may have different conceptions of what the subordinate's role necessities. Overall, job satisfaction reflects an individual's general attitude towards his or her job based on satisfaction of the needs or wants. The LMX-7 survey, satisfaction with my supervisor survey, overall job satisfaction, and demographic characteristics questionnaire were the instruments used for data collection administered to 123 participants from a convenient sample. Data was analyzed by regression analysis using the SPSS 17.0 statistical computer program.

Keywords: age, education, follower, gender, Leader-member exchange (LMX), Job satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

This quantitative research explored whether demographic differences between a leader and follower inhibit the leader-follower exchange (LMX) levels and job satisfaction. Bellou (2010) points out that organizational researchers have studied demographic characteristics as proxies of employees' background and experience. On the other hand, job satisfaction is important because it "promotes positive behaviours among employees, helping thus organizations develop core competencies and offering a major source of competitive advantage" (Bellou, 2010, p. 12). This research will add on to the knowledge of whether demographic differences between a leader and follower inhibit the LMX levels and job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is defined as the collection of feelings and beliefs that people have about their contemporary jobs (Ghazzawi, 2011). It “has probably been the most often researched work attitude in the organizational behavior literature” (Blau, 1999, p. 1099). The degree and levels of job satisfaction can range from extreme satisfaction to extreme dissatisfaction depending on what the people are experiencing in their jobs. Therefore, different factors must be considered if one is to measure job satisfaction of employees in organizations. For example, age, tenure, gender, and educational qualification may play a vital role in employee’s job satisfaction.

On the other hand, leader-member exchange theory (LMX) stresses the role making progression relating leaders and work group members who report to them and the extent to which their association displays exchange and reciprocal influence (Davis & Bryant, 2009). It is under the premise that leaders develop a separate relationship with each subordinate as the two parties mutually describe the subordinate’s role (Grean & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Yukl, 2010). Therefore, leader-member dyad with high levels of trust, liking, and respect will establish a high exchange relationship and contribute to each other beyond the requirements of the contracts (Wu, 2009, p. 1). If there are low levels, the dyadic relationship tends only to comply with the formal requirements of the work contract (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Hence, depending on whether there are high levels or low levels of trust, job satisfaction is affected.

Differences in demographic characteristics of individuals such as age, tenure, gender, and educational qualification may play an important role in the dyadic relationship between a leader and follower (Tsui & O’Reilly, 1989). Similarly, a study by Bhal, Mahfooz, and Aafaqi (2007) indicated that gender dissimilarity leads to poor quality of exchange which in turn affects job satisfaction of the employees. Further, Kavanaugh, Duffy, and Lilly (2006) indicated that tenure differences have been integrated into career stages by a number of researches. The disengagement is predicted by years in the specific job, and negatively by job commitment. Tsui and O’Reilly (1989) point out that “knowing the comparative similarity or dissimilarity in given demographic attributes of a supervisor and a subordinate or of the members of an interacting work team may provide additional information about members’ characteristic attitudes...processes through which demography affects job outcomes” (p. 403). Therefore, it is important that demographic differences between a leader and followers be explored because if there are differences the dyadic relationship is affected as there will likely be poor communication in most cases. Tsui and O’Reilly (1989) argue that the demographic effects may be a combination of a high level attraction based on similarities, attitudes, values, experience, and strong communication among interacting members of a dyad. In addition, demographic characteristic “dissimilarity can lead to repulsion” (Tsui & O’Reilly, 1989, p. 404) because people tend to be drawn to those who are comparable to themselves. Tsui & O’Reilly (1989) further pointed out that:

If dissimilarity in demographic characteristics leads to low communication between the members of a dyad, role ambiguity should also be high. If dissimilarity in demographic background leads to differences in attitudes, values, and beliefs, role conflict should also be high

because the dyad members may have different conceptions of the subordinate's role requirements (p. 405).

The results of the research for Tsui and O'Reilly (1989) reported that the subordinates in mixed-gender dyads were rated as performing more poorly and were liked less than the subordinates in same-gender dyads. In addition, the subordinates in mixed-gender dyads reported higher levels of role ambiguity and role conflict. On the other hand, Tsui and O'Reilly (1989) found out that women subordinates with woman superiors reported the lowest level of role ambiguity, were rated to be most effective, and were liked most by their superiors. However, men with women as their superiors reported the highest level of role ambiguity. In addition, subordinates in dyads with larger differences in age reported higher levels of role ambiguity; subordinates with less educational qualifications than their supervisor reported lower role ambiguity than subordinates who had the same or more educational differences than their supervisor. Finally, Tsui and O'Reilly (1989) found out that "subordinates with shorter job tenure reported the highest level of role ambiguity" (p. 416). Therefore, it is clear that if there are differences in demographic characteristics, there may be communication problems and role conflict which will in turn affect job satisfaction of employees in organizations. Mainly, this is caused by having different expectations because of the differences that exist.

By considering the expectation theory, different expectations are likely to be associated with different affective and behavioral responses at work (Brush, Moch, & Pooyan, 1987). That is the reason why sometimes differences in job satisfaction due to education qualification could be attributed to differences in expectations. In addition, based on the cohort membership theory, differences in employee satisfaction by age could be attributed to consequences of cohort membership (Brush et al., 1987). This is also true when one looks at value and belief in which demographic differences, according to Brush et al., (1987), often distinguished among individuals on the basis of cultural values, beliefs, and conceptual framework they use to interpret their experiences. Based on the brief description and concepts from the two theories--expectation and cohort membership--it is imperative that demographic differences between a leader and followers be examined.

Variables

For this research, differences in education qualification, differences in age, differences in tenure, differences in gender, LMX, and job satisfaction are the variables used because "analyses of demographic effects must consider the full impact of an individual's demographic profile rather than only one or two demographic characteristics" (Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989, p. 404-405). The LMX is the primary mediating (intervening) variable because if there are dissimilarity in demographic background leading to differences in attitudes, values, and beliefs, role conflict will be high because the dyad members may have different conceptions of the subordinate's role requirements. On the other hand, dyads with low quality exchange relationship tend only to

comply with the formal requirements of the work contract (Wu, 2009) which will result in lower job satisfaction level. However, if the LMX dyad has high levels of trust, liking, and respect, there is likely going to be a high exchange relationship which will contribute positively towards job satisfaction. Therefore, the LMX is central to the employee's job satisfaction depending on the relationship that exists between a leader and the subordinates. Creswell (2009) points out that "mediating variables stand between the independent and dependent variable, and they mediate the effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable" (p. 50). The independent variables include differences in demographic characteristics in terms of differences in education, differences in age, differences in tenure, and differences in gender because these are the ones manipulated by the research, and they will control the research analysis. A study by Kavanaugh et al., (2006) indicates that "demographic differences in terms of age, education, tenure...significantly influence job satisfaction" (p. 307). Therefore, it is important to include various demographic characteristics because individuals vary on multiple demographic characteristics. Hence "analyses of demographic effects must consider the full impact of an individual's demographic profile" (Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989, p. 404).

Job satisfaction is the dependent variable because it is the measured behavior that is expected to be caused by the independent variable (Cabanda, Fields, & Winston, 2011). It is dependent on the demographic differences between a leader and followers in terms of age, gender, tenure, and educational qualification. LMX is the mediating variable because it is believed to mediate the relationship between follower-leader demographic difference characteristics (age, gender, tenure, and educational qualification) and job satisfaction which will be mentioned in hypothesis 5.

The demographic differences tend to reduce the extent to which employees can communicate well with the supervisor. The communication affects job satisfaction in the end because if it is poor, there is an increased chance of role ambiguity between the two sides. For example, Tsui and O'Reilly (1989) point out that when members of a dyad differ on educational level, they also tend to vary on beliefs and values and may communicate relatively infrequent, since they do not have the language compatibility that is associated with similar levels of education. Therefore, LMX is central and bridges the gap between demographic differences in the dyadic relationship between a leader and follower to job satisfaction. To the best of the author's knowledge, no study to date has explicitly explored the mediation role of LMX between demographic differences and job satisfaction. Therefore, this research will add to the growing literature on the subject.

Research question

The completion of the study helped to answer the following research question: Does demographic differences between a leader and followers in terms of age, tenure, gender, and educational qualification inhibit LMX levels and job satisfaction?

Hypotheses

There are five research hypotheses for this study. The first part of the hypothesis examines the dyadic relationship and the differences between the leader and follower in terms of demographic differences of age on LMX and job satisfaction; the second of part of the hypothesis examines the dyadic relationship and the differences between the leader and the follower in terms demographic characteristics of gender on LMX and job satisfaction; the third part of the hypothesis examines the dyadic relationship and the differences between the leader and the follower in terms demographic characteristics of tenure on LMX and job satisfaction; the fourth of part of the hypothesis examines the dyadic relationship and the differences between the leader and the follower in terms demographic characteristics of education qualification on LMX and job satisfaction. Finally, the fifth part examines whether the quality of LMX will mediate the relationship between demographic differences between a leader, follower, and job satisfaction. The hypotheses are as follows:

- Hypothesis 1: Differences in age between the leader and followers are negatively related to LMX and job satisfaction levels.
- Hypothesis 2: Differences in gender between the leader and followers are negatively related to LMX and job satisfaction levels.
- Hypothesis 3: Followers who have more tenure than their supervisors have lower levels of LMX and job satisfaction compared to followers who have the same or lower tenure than their supervisor.
- Hypothesis 4: Followers who have a higher educational qualifications than their leader have lower levels of LMX and job satisfaction compared to followers who have the same or lower educational qualifications than their leader.
- Hypothesis 5: The quality of LMX will mediate the relationship between demographic differences between a leader, follower and job satisfaction.

