

Evaluating the Three Dimensions of Work Engagement in Social Security Organization of Yazd Province in Iran

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ABSTRACT: Employee engagement is emerging as a critical organizational issue especially as businesses are recovering from the trauma of the global recession. Employee engagement has been an area of interest among many researchers and it had received a greater recognition among firms. Therefore, there is a need for organizations to evaluate the level of engagement among their employees. This study aims to assess the dimensions of employees' engagement in Yazd Social Security Organization. The data used in this study consist of questionnaire responses from employees in Yazd Social Security Organization. A total of 250 questionnaires were sent out and 152 valid responses were received. In this study, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and binomial test was employed to test the research hypotheses. We concluded that work engagement and its dimensions are higher than average level among employees of Yazd Social Security Organization. Of the three dimensions of work engagement, absorption dimension of work engagement was higher than other dimensions in Yazd Social Security Organization. Dedication dimension needed more attention.

Key words: Work Engagement, Employees' Engagement, Vigor, Dedication, Absorption

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INTRODUCTION

Engagement is a construct naturally subsumed within the increasingly popular domains of positive psychology and positive organizational behavior, which aim to enhance employees' positive experiences of work. Employee engagement is a desirable condition, has an organizational purpose, and connotes involvement, commitment, passion, enthusiasm, focused effort, and energy so it has both attitudinal and behavioral components (Mills, 2012). Engagement is important for organizations since it contributes to the bottom line. Recent studies have shown that work engagement is positively related to supervisor-ratings of job performance, financial results, and client satisfaction (Bakker et al., 2012). The multifaceted concept of work commitment has received growing attention from researchers and practitioners, directed mainly at the broader concept covering specific commitment objects (Kanste, 2011). Therefore because of the importance of employees' engagement in organizations, the main purpose of present study is assessing the dimensions of employees' engagement in Yazd Social Security Organization.

Work Engagement

Work engagement is an active, positive work-related state that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Work engagement is an independent, persistent and pervasive motivational psychological state that accompanies the behavioral investment of personal energy (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2010). As a motivational-psychological state, work engagement is a response or

reaction to one's work. Engagement is specifically related to the employees' 'presenting and absenting themselves during task performances'. In other words, it is about involvement of 'self' in the work (Berkel et al., 2011).

Different definitions have been proposed for work engagement in the literature. Some of them are here. Kahn (1990) coined one of the most recognizable definitions of engagement: "the harnessing of organizational members' selves to their work role". Work engagement is defined as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" and can influence employee health (Inoue et al., 2013). Work engagement is a state of enthusiastic and complete involvement in work (Rich et al., 2010; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2014). Work engagement can be defined as 'a positive, fulfilling, affective-motivational state of work-related well-being that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Kanste, 2011). Work engagement is a transient, positive, fulfilling and work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption and fluctuates within individuals over a short period of time (Breevaart et al., 2013; Breevaart et al., 2014)

Work engagement is composed of three dimensions: vigor, dedication and absorption. Vigor refers to energy, mental resilience, determination and investing consistent effort in job (Rayton and Yalabik, 2014). Vigor is one of the aspects of work engagement that implies high levels of energy and mental resilience while working. There is also a determined investment in the actual work, together with high levels of persistence even when faced with difficulties. This aspect can be determined based on Atkinson's

motivational theory. Motivation is strength of doing work or resistance against that. So, strength and resistance are addressed as aspects of work engagement and their concept is constant with popular definition of motivation (Latham and Pinder, 2005). The second dimension, Dedication is about being inspired, enthusiastic and highly involved in your job (Rayton and Yalabik, 2014). Dedication is an individual's deriving a sense of significance from work, feeling enthusiastic and proud about the given job, and feeling inspired and challenged by the job (Song et al., 2012). The last dimension, absorption, refers to a sense of detachment from your surroundings, a high degree of concentration on your job, and a general lack of conscious awareness of the amount of time spent on the job (Rayton and Yalabik, 2014). Absorption means concentration and being engrossed in people's work, whereby passing time will be intangible and being detached from the job has some difficulties for them. Furthermore, it is pleasurable to have job experience for individuals. They do that, only for having that and paying high expenditure for job is not such important issue which it is for the others (Hayati et al., 2014).

Researchers have examined the relationship between work engagement and other variables and concepts. Some of them are listed below. Karatepe et al. (2014) examined the mediating role of work engagement in the relationship between challenge stressors and job outcomes. The results revealed that not all stressors are bad and produce negative job outcomes. Stressors appraised as challenges increase work engagement. This result contradicts other studies which report that there is no relationship between job demands and work engagement. The results further demonstrate that work engagement fully mediates the effects of challenge stressors on affective organizational commitment and job performance. That is, work overload and job responsibility as the indicators of challenge stressors facing frontline employees lead to work engagement that in turn triggers the aforementioned job outcomes. Karatepe (2013) reported that work engagement acted as a full mediator of the effects of perceptions of organizational politics on affective organizational commitment. Runhaar et al. (2013) examined the influence of teachers' work context, in terms of autonomy and leader membership exchange (LMX), on the relationship between their work engagement and organizational citizenship behaviours (OCBs). Survey data from six Dutch schools for secondary education showed that autonomy and LMX both weakened the relationships between work engagement and OCBI and OCBO respectively. Kovjanic et al. (2013) tested experimentally their hypotheses that the satisfaction of followers' basic

psychological needs (i.e., for competence, relatedness, and autonomy) and work engagement mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and performance. A total of 190 participants worked on a brainstorming task under either a transformational or a non-transformational leadership condition. Followers' performance was operationalized through quantity, quality, and persistence. Results revealed that satisfaction of the needs for competence and relatedness mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and work engagement, which, in turn, was positively related to quality, quantity and persistence. Dylag et al. (2013) investigated the level of discrepancy between individual and organizational values, and assessed its impact on white-collar workers' job burnout and work engagement. The study examined the hypothesis that the better the fit between individual and organizational values, the higher the work engagement and the lower the risk of professional burnout. The modified Schwartz's typology of values, focusing on work related issues, was used as a framework for the study. Also, organizational level analysis was incorporated into the study questionnaire in order to capture the potential mismatch effect between the person and his or her work environment. A total of 480 white-collar workers employed in Polish public and private organizations participated in the study. They represented various service industry sectors, including education, health care, and sales. The results showed an increase in occupational burnout and decrease in work engagement under condition of perceived discrepancy between individual and organizational values at work. Kühnel et al. (2012) tested the effects of day-specific job demands and day-specific job and personal resources on day specific work engagement. One hundred and fourteen employees completed electronic questionnaires three times a day over the course of one working week. Hierarchical linear models indicated that day-specific resources (psychological climate, job control and being recovered in the morning) promoted work engagement. As predicted, day specific job control qualified the relationship between day-specific time pressure and work engagement: on days with higher job control, time pressure was beneficial for work engagement. On days with lower job control, time pressure was detrimental for work engagement. Karatepe (2011) in a study of frontline hotel employees in Nigeria showed that procedural justice triggered affective organizational commitment and job performance via work engagement. Slåtten and Mehmetoglu (2011) indicated that work engagement fully mediated the effects of autonomy, strategic orientation and role benefit on innovative behavior among frontline employees in the hospitality industry

in Norway. Lin (2010) proposed a research model based on attachment theory, which examined the role of corporate citizenship in the formation of organizational trust and work engagement. In the model, work engagement is directly influenced by four dimensions of perceived corporate citizenship, including economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary citizenship, while work engagement is also indirectly affected by perceived corporate citizenship through the mediation of organizational trust. Empirical testing using a survey of personnel from 12 large firms confirmed the hypothesized effects.

Methodology

The aim of this study is to evaluate the three dimensions of work engagement. The target population of this study was the employees of Yazd Social Security Organization. Of the 250 questionnaires that were distributed, 152 usable questionnaires were returned, a response rate of 61%.

Work engagement was measured by three dimension approach proposed by Schaufeli et al.

(2002). The three dimensions are vigor, dedication and absorption. Reliability of constructs was evaluated by Cronbach's α . Table 1 lists the Cronbach's α of the constructs. As can be seen, all constructs have Cronbach's above 0.7, which indicates high reliability.

Table 1. Cronbach's Alpha of the constructs

Constructs	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Vigor	6	0.812
Dedication	5	0.799
Absorption	6	0.812
Engagement	17	0.823

Validity of constructs was evaluated by confirmatory factor analysis. Figure 1 shows the results of confirmatory factor analysis in t-value mode. Results of confirmatory factor analysis show that all the relations are significant. Because the t-value of all the relations is less than 2 (Liao et. al., 2008). This indicates that the questionnaire is valid.

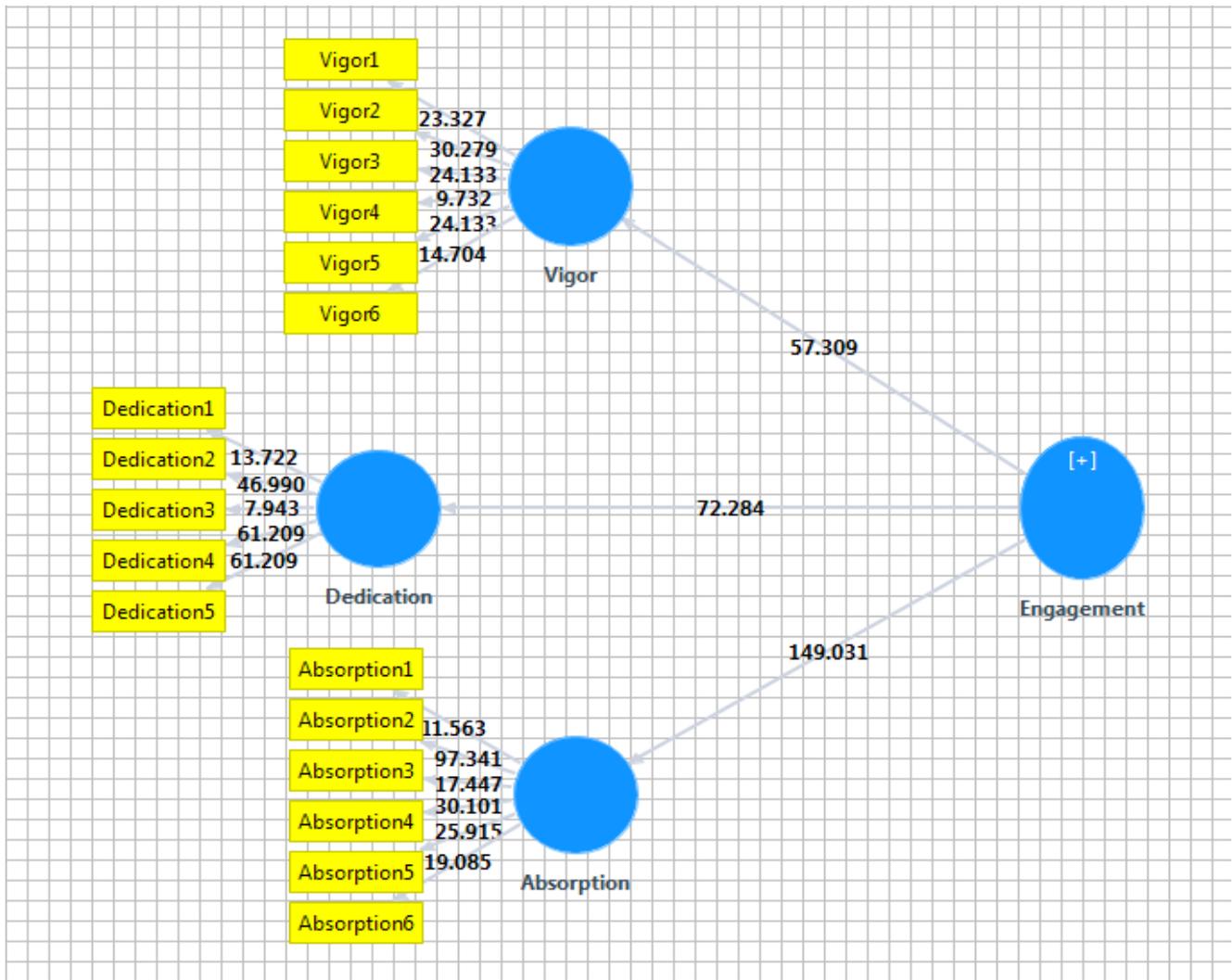


Figure 1. Confirmatory factor analysis (Unstandardized Coefficients)

Research Hypothesis

The main hypothesis of paper is coming as below:

H1: Work engagement is higher than average level among employees of Yazd Social Security Organization.

Secondary research hypotheses are:

H11: Vigor dimension of work engagement is higher than average level among employees of Yazd Social Security Organization.

H12: Dedication dimension of work engagement is higher than average level among employees of Yazd Social Security Organization.

H13: Absorption dimension of work engagement is higher than average level among employees of Yazd Social Security Organization.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics of the research constructs are shown in Table 2 and includes number of questionnaires, mean and standard deviations of the constructs. For testing the secondary hypotheses of

the research, we used Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and binomial test. We used Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to check the constructs' normality assumption. Table 2 shows the results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. Since the p-value of all variables is less than 0.05, we conclude that none of the variables' distributions is normal (Rouhi et al., 2013). So we have to use non-parametric tests.

Since the variables' distributions were not normal, we use non-parametric binomial test for calculating the level of constructs in Yazd Social Security Organization. Table 4 contains the result of binomial test.

As can be seen in Table 4, the sig. of the test for all constructs of work engagement is less than 0.05. So we conclude that all three dimensions of work engagement is higher than average level among employees of Yazd Social Security Organization. Hence H11, H12 and H13 are supported. For testing the main hypothesis, we used Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and binomial test.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Construct	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Vigor	152	3.9342	1.04007
Dedication	152	3.4803	0.81355
Absorption	152	4.1776	0.94974
Engagement	152	3.4803	0.81355
Valid N (list wise)	152	--	--

Table 3. Results of K-S test for dimensions of work engagement

		Vigor	Dedication	Absorption
N		152	152	152
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	3.9342	3.4803	4.1776
	Std. Deviation	1.0400	.81355	0.94974
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	0.255	0.350	0.320
	Positive	0.190	0.235	0.193
	Negative	-.255	-0.350	-0.320
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		3.146	4.320	3.944
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.000

Table 4. Results of binomial test for dimensions of work engagement

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)
Vigor	Group 1	<= 3	57	0.38	0.50	0.003
	Group 2	> 3	95	0.63		
	Total		152	1.00		
Dedication	Group 1	<= 3	59	0.39	0.50	0.007
	Group 2	> 3	93	0.61		
	Total		152	1.00		
Absorption	Group 1	<= 3	45	0.30	0.50	0.000
	Group 2	> 3	107	0.70		
	Total	--	152	1.00		

We used Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to check the work engagement' normality assumption. Table 5 shows the results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. Since the p-value of the variable is less than 0.05, we conclude that work engagement' distribution is not normal (Rouhi et al., 2013).

So we have to use non-parametric tests. Since the variable's distribution was not normal, we use non-parametric binomial test for calculating the level of constructs in Yazd Social Security Organization. Table 6 contains the result of binomial test.

As can be seen in Table 6, the sig. of the test for work engagement is less than 0.05. So we conclude that all work engagement is higher than average level among employees of Yazd Social Security Organization. Hence H1 is supported.

Finally we have ranked the dimensions of work engagement in Yazd Social Security Organization using Friedman test. The results contain two outputs that are shown in Table 7 and 8.

As can be seen in Table 7, the sig. of the test is less than 0.05. So we conclude that the importance of the dimensions of work engagement is not the same in Yazd Social Security Organization. Table 8 shows the ranking of the three dimensions of work engagement.

As can be seen in Table 8 the results indicate that the level of absorption dimension of work engagement is higher than other dimensions in Yazd Social Security Organization. But dedication dimension needs more attention.

Table 5. Results of K-S test for work engagement

Variable		Engagement
N		152
Normal Parameters^{a,b}	Mean	3.4803
	Std. Deviation	0.81355
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	0.350
	Positive	0.235
	Negative	-0.350
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		4.320
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000

Table 6. Results of binomial test for work engagement

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)
Engagement	Group 1	<= 3	59	0.39	0.50	0.007
	Group 2	> 3	93	0.61		
	Total		152	1.00		

Table 7. Test statistics

N	152
Chi-Square	97.136
df	3
Sig.	0.000

Table 8. Ranking dimensions of engagement

Engagement's Dimensions	Mean Rank	Rank
Vigor	2.80	2
Dedication	2.07	3
Absorption	3.06	1

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Given that employee engagement is an idea that helps develop strong positive attitudes among people towards their work and their organisation, and this plays a major role in ensuring that they give their best

even when times are tough, surely we need to improve it now more than ever. So because of the importance of employee engagement in organizations, in this research we assessed the employees' engagement and its dimensions in Yazd Social Security Organization. The results revealed that work engagement and its dimensions are higher than average level among employees of Yazd Social Security Organization.

But a closer look reveals that, employee engagement is not a single, unitary construct. In itself this is not a problem, but it is important to recognise that each of the different factors that are bundled together under the engagement umbrella do not have the same consequences or causes. For example, it is perfectly possible for someone to be committed to their job but not to their organisation. Because engagement is not one construct but many, it means that the outcomes will vary depending on which

aspect of engagement is involved. The blanket idea that higher engagement will lead to better performance is just not the case.

Some recent research has shown that people who have positive attitudes towards their organisations do not necessarily work harder. On the other hand, people who focus on solving problems and behave positively are not necessarily loyal to their organisation. What this means is that you would need to influence a particular aspect of engagement if striving for a specific result. For example, if the goal is to get people to support and help each other more enthusiastically, the focus should be on the organisational citizenship aspect of engagement, rather than, say, trying to improve job satisfaction.

Although engagement is made up of many facets, there is one core component that managers and organisations need to grasp and take seriously: employees need to feel that their organisation is genuinely interested in them. Focusing on how to get discretionary effort from people, or how to ensure that they believe in the organisation's mission, must not take priority over demonstrating concern over employees' wellbeing. In present study, the results of ranking the dimensions of work engagement indicated that the level of dedication dimension of work engagement is lower than other dimensions in Yazd Social Security Organization. That is, dedication dimension needs more attention. So to promote this dimension managers must provide a climate in their organization so that employees:

- Find the work that they do full of meaning and purpose
- Be enthusiastic about their job
- Be inspired with their job
- Be proud on the work that they do
- Feel that their job is challenging

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