

Summary of the Research on Teachers' Work Engagement in China

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Abstract: Work engagement is a new trend in the study of job burnout and a new direction with the rise of positive psychology. At present, there is no unified conclusion on the definition of work engagement in our country, but they all include the positive emotions and cognition of individuals about work. The scales for work engagement are basically adapted from foreign scales and lack originality. Personal factors such as gender, teaching age, teaching efficacy and academic qualifications, external factors such as educational development levels, school management and working environment, school assessment and professional title evaluation standards, etc. will all affect the level of teachers' work engagement. There is a significant positive correlation between work engagement and work performance. The level of teachers' work engagement can be improved from the national and school policies, teacher evaluation system and professional title review system, school management and cultivation. Future research should pay attention to localized research, longitudinal research and qualitative research.

Keywords: Teachers, Work engagement, Research summary, China.

1. Introduction

In recent years, the problem of rising teacher burnout rate has aroused people's attention. With the rise of positive psychology, more and more psychologists have begun to pay attention to work-engagement research, the opposite of job-burnout. The teachers' work engagement is of great significance to students and education. Teachers maintain a good state of work engagement is a prerequisite for the flourishing development of education. At present, the work engagement of teachers in our country has been greatly reduced, and the rate of teacher burnout has gradually increased. Therefore, how to improve teachers' work engagement has become a problem that we need to pay attention to, and there are more and more researches on teachers' work engagement. This article sorts out and summarizes the related literature of teachers' work engagement in my country from the definition and measurement of teachers' work engagement, influencing factors, and promotion strategies.

2. Definition of Teachers' Work Engagement

After sorting out and analyzing the research results of foreign scholars on work engagement, Chinese scholars Li Rui and Ling Wenquan (2007) put forward that work engagement is a positive and complete emotional and cognitive state related to work, which is diffuse and lasting. The characteristics of sex have a certain impact on the individual's work performance, work attitude and certain behavioral variables [1]. All in all, work engagement is a positive attitude of employees to their careers, and they believe that they can get self-improvement and exercise at work, as well as a state of satisfaction and happiness in the long-term at work.

Regarding the definition of teacher work engagement, there is no unified conclusion. Most scholars tend to divide teacher work engagement into several dimensions to explain. Sheng Jiansen(2006) pointed out that teachers' work engagement has

a certain psychological structure, which can be divided into three dimensions: work importance, work pleasure, and work focus. Among them, "work pleasure" means that the individual's own advantages are valued and developed in the work, and his own work interests are satisfied, which will make the individual feel satisfied and happy, and feel the joy of life. In addition, "importance of work", "work fun" and "work focus" reflect the teachers' work engagement from three aspects: cognition, emotion and behavior intention [2]. Wei Guanling(2010) proposed that teachers' work engagement is a long-term, positive, perfect, and healthy work state that individuals manifest themselves in their daily work.[3].

3. Measurement of Work Engagement

Domestic work engagement scales are basically adapted from scales that have been compiled abroad. Utrecht work engagement scale (UWES) is the most widely recognized work engagement in the world. Zhang Yiwen (2005) introduced the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale into China and made the Chinese version of the UWES Scale, and tested the reliability and validity of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale for middle school teachers and found that the reliability of the Chinese version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale Indicators such as validity and validity meet the requirements of psychometrics and can be adopted by relevant research institutes in the future [4]. Guo Tao (2013) draws on relevant research on work engagement at home and abroad, and combined with the actual situation of Chinese college teachers, designed a scale for college teachers' work engagement. The scale includes three dimensions, namely engagement in work, identification with organization, and active participation. There are a total of 18 items of measurement indicators [5]. Sheng Jiansen (2003) self-compiled "Teacher's Work Engagement Scale" has three dimensions, namely the importance of work, the fun of work, and the focus of work, which are divided into six levels. In order to improve the reliability of the scale, Sheng Jiansen also added two polygraph questions that he compiled into the independent variable table [6]. Based on previous literature

and the UWES scale, Wei Guanling (2010) produced her own primary and secondary school teacher's work engagement scale. There are 171 items, including work value dimensions, work pleasure dimensions, work endeavour dimensions, and work responsibility dimensions. Three dimensions [3].

4. Affecting Factors

According to the relevant literature read, this article divides the main influencing factors of teachers' work engagement into two categories: personal factors and external factors. Among them, personal factors include the individual's gender, teaching age, self-efficacy, educational background and so on. External factors include social factors and educational development level, as well as relevant national education policies, school working environment, school title evaluation standards, etc.

4.1. Personal Factors

1) Gender. Many studies have shown that female teachers are higher than men in all aspects of their work engagement. The research of Sheng Jiansen (2006) found that female teachers scored higher than male teachers in all aspects. Among them, female teachers' scores in the focus of work engagement were significantly higher than male teachers' scores. However, both the fun and importance of work engagement There is no significant difference in each dimension [6]. Li Xincui's (2016) survey shows that female teachers' work engagement, work dedication and concentration are higher than male teachers. However, there are also different research results [7]. Jiao Haitao (2008) found that there is no significant difference between female teachers and male teachers in terms of research on organizational climate in middle schools and teachers' work engagement [8]. Similarly, the results of Li Min's (2015) middle school work engagement study are similar to Jiao Haitao's research results, which show that the work engagement of male and female teachers is basically the same, and there is no significant difference [9]. The reasons for the different research results may be the time of the research and the different areas where teachers sampled, as well as the different work engagement scales used. Among them, Sheng Jiansen and Li Xincui used self-made scales, which may be more suitable for Chinese culture; while Li Min and Jiao Haitao used UWES compiled by the Chinese Schaufeli.

2) Teaching age. Jiao Haitao's research found that the relationship between teaching age and work engagement is roughly an inverted U-shape. Teachers with 0 to 5 years of teaching experience have the highest sense of work engagement, followed by teachers with more than 25 years of teaching experience, and then teachers with 6 to 15 years and 16 to 25 years of teaching experience. In short, teachers with a teaching experience of 16 to 25 years have the lowest sense of work engagement [8]. Sheng Jiansen's research found that with the increase of teaching age, teachers' work engagement and their scores on the three dimensions showed a "wave-shaped" upward trend, and there were significant differences in work engagement among teachers of different ages. Intern teachers have the lowest degree of work engagement, and then as the teaching age increases, their sense of work engagement also increases; after 6 years, teachers' sense of work engagement has a downward trend; 11 years later, teachers' sense of work engagement has increased significantly, but after 25 years there has been a downward trend [6].

3) Teaching self-efficacy. In 2016, Hu Linmei further studied the mediating effect of classroom emotions and teacher efficacy on work engagement, and found that teacher efficacy, as an intermediary variable, is affected by classroom emotions, which in turn affects teachers' sense of work engagement. It shows that the positive emotions in the classroom can improve the teacher's sense of efficacy, and the teacher's sense of efficacy can promote the teacher's work engagement [10].

4) Education background. Many studies believe that the higher the academic qualifications, the lower the teaching engagement. Meng Ningning (2014) used three scales including the UWES scale to investigate and research frontline teachers in junior high schools. The study found that there are significant differences in the effects of academic qualifications on teachers' work engagement, engagement and concentration. The lower the level of education, the higher the degree of engagement in work [11]. The results of He Ni (2012) survey of college teachers show that the higher the educational background, the lower the engagement in teaching. Teachers with a bachelor's degree should have a higher engagement in teaching than teachers with a master's degree, and teachers with a master's degree should have higher engagement in teaching than teachers with a doctoral degree. This shows that with the improvement of college teachers' academic qualifications, they need to participate in more and more scientific research projects, so their engagement in teaching is gradually reduced [12]. At the same time, there are different research results. Li Min (2015) used a self-compiled scale to investigate middle school teachers in my country's eastern, central, and western regions. The results show that the higher the academic qualifications of teachers, the higher their sense of work engagement [9]. The differences in the results of these studies may be caused by the different scales used in the study and the different regions of the research subjects.

4.2. External Factors

External factors mainly include social factors and educational development level, as well as relevant national education policies, school management working environment, school title evaluation standards, etc.

1) Social factors and educational development level. Meng Yong (2013) believes that Chinese society is at a critical stage of transformation, and society has put forward new and higher requirements on teachers. People are often paying more attention to teachers' dedication, responsibilities and obligations, and to teachers' basic rights and needs. But it is often overlooked. This will put teachers under immense pressure and prevent them from devoting themselves to teaching [13]. Liu Zhentian (2013) believes that the rapid development of the physical aspects of school hardware and the slow development of the connotation, and the traditional and backward school running concepts, education and teaching concepts are used. Teachers may feel frustrated and lose confidence in themselves because they feel that they cannot contribute to education. Unable to get a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment from work and thus lose enthusiasm for the profession of teacher, so the level of work engagement is low [14].

2) School management and working environment. Yin Hui (2005) believes that the school's teaching conditions and various teaching facilities, students' learning atmosphere and school spirit, the school's internal management mechanism

and the quality of school leaders will all affect teachers' work commitment [15]. A research by Mao Jinping (2017) found that the objective and fair treatment of teachers' work, sincere and open communication with teachers, and the ability to consider and take into account teachers' ideas, sincere leaders have a certain impact on the improvement of teachers' sense of work engagement [16].

3) School assessment and professional title evaluation standards. Chen Niuze (2016) believes that the evaluation standards of teachers' professional titles have affected the enthusiasm of many primary and middle school teachers and the country's comprehensive quality education recognition and value. This will not only make teachers feel that they have been treated unfairly, but they will also focus on doing scientific research projects rather than teaching students well, and it will also make teachers who are dedicated to teaching students in class burnout [17].

5. Relationship of Work Engagement and Work Performance

The research results show that work engagement will have an impact on performance as an intermediary variable. Guo Tao's research shows that college teachers' work engagement is significantly related to their work performance, and the level of dedication of teachers has a significant positive impact on their work performance [5]. Wang Bei's research found that the vitality dimension and dedication dimension of work engagement are significantly positively correlated with the various dimensions of work performance [18].

6. Strategies for Improving Teachers' Work Engagement

To increase teachers' work engagement, we can proceed from the following aspects: national and school policies, school title evaluation standards, school management and cultivation.

1) National and school policies. Li Rui and Ling Wenquan (2007) believe that the government and schools should establish relevant long-term and efficient incentive mechanisms including teaching performance evaluation and salary linkage mechanism to create and provide a good and high-quality teaching environment [1]. Hou Zhuping believes that in terms of policies, it is necessary to increase engagement in education funds, increase teachers' salaries and treatment, and motivate teachers from the material aspect to keep teachers passionate about their work; schools must introduce relevant policies that are conducive to strengthening teaching work to mobilize them. The majority of teachers devote themselves to teaching enthusiasm; at the same time organize related lectures or activities to cultivate teachers' sense of responsibility and teaching enthusiasm [19].

2) Teacher assessment system and professional title review system. Li Ping believes that in order to improve teachers' work engagement and work enthusiasm, it is necessary to change the general phenomenon of teachers' professional title evaluation that only emphasizes scientific research results but not teaching results. More attention should be paid to the teachers' own work of lectures and teaching, so that the evaluation of professional titles should be directed to teaching. The quality of the work is inclined to provide support for teachers who are dedicated to completing the teaching work. The specific method can force the quality and quantity of teachers' teaching work in each semester, and add this to the

standards of teacher title evaluation, requiring even professors to complete the teaching requirements [20]. Meng Yong (2013) believes that work engagement will have a direct impact on the physical and mental health of college teachers. He investigated the main influencing factors of the formation of work engagement from the perspective of positive psychology, and proposed that one of the positive strategies to increase work engagement is to improve the evaluation system [13]. Jing Huanhuan (2013) believes that for schools of all levels and types, teachers' work engagement and work status are the key factors affecting school teaching and education, and schools should improve the teacher assessment system when increasing teachers' work engagement [21].

3) School management and cultivation. Xin Jun believes that in terms of management, firstly, college leaders should implement a more democratic and humane teaching management method, so that teachers can devote themselves to actual teaching work; secondly, it is necessary to strengthen the service measures for teaching and fully Respect and trust teachers, give them room to play, and encourage teachers to carry out continuous reforms and innovations in curriculum and teaching [22]. Li Rui and Ling Wenquan (2007) believe that it is necessary to focus on the professional emotional education of school teachers and the cultivation of teachers' sense of responsibility, organically combine spiritual encouragement with material rewards, and increase the recognition and publicity of school teachers' teaching work; Teachers' ideological and moral education lectures and group psychological counseling activities are carried out to cultivate teachers' sense of responsibility and mobilize teachers' enthusiasm for work[1]

7. Conclusion

Work engagement is a relatively new research direction. Now foreign countries have made certain progress through research, and relevant influencing factors are constantly being discovered. In China, related research fields have gradually attracted the attention of researchers, but the research is still in its infancy, and there are still many other issues that need to be further explored.

First of all, people from different cultural backgrounds may have different perceptions of work engagement, and the research results of Western countries may not be suitable for our employees. Therefore, it is necessary to use Chinese culture to interpret work engagement in accordance with China's national conditions, increase research on work engagement, explore the connotation and scope of work engagement of Chinese employees, formulate a work engagement scale that conforms to Chinese culture, and conduct research on various types of employees. Investigate to understand the status quo of work engagement and seek corresponding countermeasures; at the same time, it is necessary to understand the relationship between work engagement and other related variables, find the factors that affect work engagement and variables affected by work engagement, and provide a theory for companies to improve the work engagement level of employees On the support.

Secondly, in terms of research methods, the current research is mostly carried out by theoretical research and questionnaire methods, and mainly cross-sectional research, lacking longitudinal comparative tracking research. Future research should pay attention to the use of longitudinal research, supplemented by qualitative research methods, in order to better find the development process and mechanism

of work engagement.

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