Research article

A SURVEY ON FACTORS INFLUENCEING EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR IN CHINA

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Abstract

Purpose

The current study aimed to explore factors that influence employee well-being and their relationship with organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in northern China.

Design/methodology/approach

Focusing on employees working in the manufacturing and service industries, this study develops a scale to measure employee well-being from various perspectives (including salary satisfaction) and uses a stratified sampling method to select a group of 320 employees to build a structural equation model (SEM). The SEM is used to analyze factors that influence well-being and their relationships with OCB.

Findings

First, employee well-being includes salary satisfaction, democratic harmony, inner motivation, work-life balance, toughness and optimism, and work acceptance (by superiors). Second, employee well-being has positive effects on OCB. Third, toughness and optimism, as well as the superior's acceptance of the subordinate's work, have positive effects on OCB. Finally, salary satisfaction, democratic harmony, inner

motivation, and work-life balance do not obviously influence OCB.

Originality/value

Although scholars have adopted various standards for selecting dimensions of employee well-being, a satisfactory scale has not been released in China due to cultural differences. This study developed a measurement scale to explore factors that influence employee well-being and their relationship with OCB in northern China, which achieved good results. The findings of this study may enrich theory in related fields such as management science and social psychology.   **Copyright © AJSSAL, all rights reserved.**

Keywords: employee well-being, organizational citizenship behavior, structural equation model, measurement scale

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Introduction

Well-being embodies the human recognition of the overall degree of perception of all materials and spirits. From time immemorial, human beings have pursued well-being, and scholars have attempted to explore well-being in different fields.

Employee well-being is an important topic in studies and closely related to employees' satisfaction with their lives and emotional experiences (Diener *et al*., 2003). Employee well-being is influenced by employees' positive emotions and cognitive appraisal of their job (Wright and Cropanzano, 2004), and because it represents employees' comprehensive perception of their mental satisfaction during work, employee well-being is subject to employees' subjective assessment of their job. Employees who feel happy and joyful work more efficiently. If an employee believes that his job can bring him happiness and help him realize his ambitions, he will perform his work more efficiently. Compared with employees with low well-being, employees with high well-being are more likely to perform their jobs more efficiently, are more time conscious, and are more likely to actively work for the benefit of the enterprise beyond their job descriptions. In addition, employees with high well-being are characterized by 16% higher overall achievement, a 125% lower occupation fatigue rate, 32% higher organization loyalty, and 46% higher self-reported job satisfaction than their low well-being counterparts (Li and Deng, 2011). Improving employee well-being has thus become an objective of organizational management (Wright and Cropanzano, 2004). However, in the pursuit of high performance and benefits, many enterprises have attempted to realize rapid growth within a short period and have neglected employee perceptions of well-being. As a result, employees' enthusiasm for work wanes, and their organizational loyalty fades. How is employee well-being related to working behavior and attitudes? Answering this question is becoming an important issue in the field of enterprise human resources management.

Employee well-being can be influenced by political and cultural factors (such as freedom, democracy and decentralization), economic factors (such as economic inflation, employment status, labor laws, income level and distributional structure), social statistical factors (such as age, gender, race, marriage, interpersonal relations, and social network), and genetic and character factors (De Neve *et al*., 2010; Tian, 2006). Many other factors, such as human resources management (Li and Deng, 2011), occupational pressure, educational background and job category (Zhang and Guo, 2011), person-environment fit (Zhang, 2012), achievement work system (Chen, 2014), organizational support resources (Du *et al*., 2014), and professions (Li, 2014), may also influence

employee well-being. These factors determine the methods that are used to measure employee well-being.

To date, scholars have adopted various standards for selecting dimensions of employee well-being. For instance, Huhtala (2007) and Hans (2010) used a two-dimensional scale, Alfredo, Elfi, Hans, Bernardo, and Juan (2009) used a three-dimensional scale, and Ryff (1995) used a six-dimensional scale in separate measures of employee well-being. Hofmann and Tetrick (2003) found that employee well-being can be directly translated into the cost of employee health because well-being helps employees have a positive mentality, which is a source of job satisfaction. However, none of these scales is applicable to all enterprises or countries because employee well-being is influenced by various factors.

In China, scholars have engaged in substantial efforts to identify suitable measures of employee well-being. Xing and Huang (2004) and Jiang (2006) introduced Ryff's six-dimensional scale to study the well-being of urban residents and administrators in Chinese universities and colleges, respectively. Feng *et al.* (2008) used a three-dimensional scale to describe employee well-being when he studied its relation with performance. Miao (2003) developed a nine-dimensional multiple-happiness questionnaire (MHQ). Studies on employee well-being in China have also experienced certain limitations that are described below. For instance, Chinese scholars have integrated measurement scales of well-being borrowed from foreign countries, but few studies have distinguished and repeatedly tested those dimensions. As a result, cultural differences between China and western countries have been ignored. Empirical studies (e.g., Xing and Huang, 2004; Jiang, 2005) have also indicated that the validity of scales borrowed from western countries is not ideally suited to study issues in eastern countries. Therefore, developing an employee well-being scale to apply in the context of a Chinese cultural background is of great theoretical and practical significance for exploring the factors that influence the well-being of Chinese employees and management measures that may improve employee well-being in the Chinese context.

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is another important concept that is closely related to employee well-being. The concept of OCB was first proposed by Smith *et al.* (1983) and Organ (1988). In 1997, Organ redefined the concept of OCB as a type of behavior that provides roles for maintaining and strengthening the organizational social context and psychological environment that are necessary to improve organizational performance. Numerous studies have shown that enterprises that focus on employee well-being might inspire professional dedication among employees and improve their organizational commitment and/or participation. Furthermore, employee well-being might help employees build organizational citizenship virtues and contribute to establishing favorable behaviors among organizational members. Consequently, whether OCB might be one factor as a variable has become a major research direction regarding the subject of employee well-being. Currently, studies on employee well-being mainly begin with employees' family and job to determine factors that influence employee well-being. Among these factors, variables such as public-private distinction and identification with the organization clearly have strong predictive power. Nevertheless, all these studies (e.g., Chen and Jia, 2013; Han and Li, 2013; Xie and Sun, 2012) have focused on only one core variable that affects employee well-being in only one direction. Further, most previous studies have focused on the perspective of organizational systems, organizational change, employee performance or enterprise benefits to discuss the relationships of these perspectives with well-being. In contrast, few academic studies have examined whether employee well-being promotes the establishment of OCB. Does employee well-being exert obvious effects on

OCB? If there is a positive relationship, to what degree is it positive? Do various factors that influence employee well-being have significant effects on OCB? Empirical research to answer these questions is currently lacking.

Targeting employees of industrial and commercial enterprises in northern China, this study aims to discuss the factors that influence employee well-being to develop a scale for employee well-being. A structural equation model (SEM) is then employed to study the relationship between employee well-being and OCB, to expand the academic understanding of well-being in human resources management, and to provide theoretical support for enhancing employee well-being and OCB. Subsequently, modified employee well-being and OCB scales are introduced, and the reliability and validity of the questionnaires are tested with a small-scale test. Then, a large-scale test is conducted, and the acquired data are analyzed. Finally, the implications of the obtained empirical results and the limitations of the study are discussed.

Prior studies have focused on the perspective of family and work to determine the degree to which different factors influence employee well-being. Among the various factors that influence OCB, variables such as public-private distinction and identification with the organization can best predict OCB. Nevertheless, these studies examined the association from one direction and focused solely on the effects of one core variable on OCB. Does employee well-being have significant effects on OCB? If there is a positive relationship, to what degree is it positive? Do various factors influencing employee well-being have obvious effects on OCB? No empirical research exists to answer these questions. This study will discuss various factors that influence employee well-being and analyze their relations with OCB.

The hypotheses are summarized as follows:

H1: Salary satisfaction will have positive effects on OCB.

H2: Democratic harmony will have positive effects on OCB.

H3: Inner incentive will have positive effects on OCB.

H4: Work-life balance will have positive effects on OCB.

H5: Toughness and optimism will have positive effects on OCB.

H6: Work acceptability will have positive effects on OCB.

Based on the aforementioned assumptions, a SEM was employed to describe the relationship between employee well-being and OCB (Fig. 1).
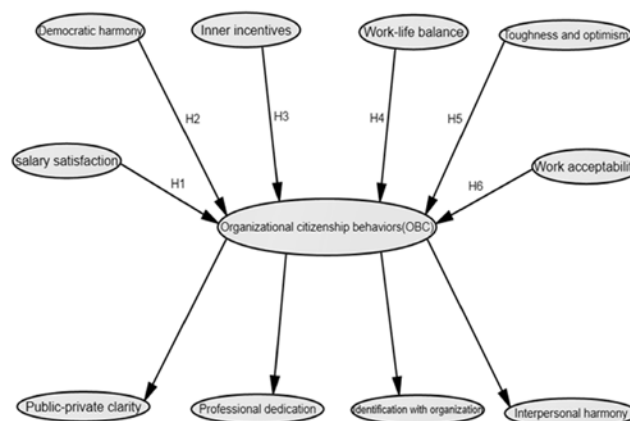

Fig. 1: Structural relationship between employee well-being and OCB.

Materials and Methods

Participants

Targeting full-time employees working in the manufacturing and service industries, this study adopted a random sampling method to implement its structural test. To guarantee sample heterogeneity, respondents were selected to allow for as much heterogeneity in industry, organization, position level, profession and age as possible. A total of 400 questionnaires were sent out, and 320 were returned as valid, yielding a valid recovery rate of 80%. The demographic distribution for the respondents showed that males and females accounted for 46% and 54% of the respondents, respectively. Moreover, respondents under 30, between 30 and 40, and over 40 years old accounted for 54%, 37%, and 9% of the sample, respectively. Regarding educational background, respondents with a bachelor or master degree accounted for 34.81% of the respondents. Regarding work experience, respondents with less than nine years of tenure accounted for 67.43% of the respondents, whereas the remaining workers had more than nine years of tenure.

Materials

The Questionnaire. This current study aims to investigate (1) factors that influence employee well-being, (2) factors that influence OCB, and (3) the effects of employee well-being on OCB. Regarding the first aspect, scales measuring employee well-being developed by Ryff (1995) were used. Based on a focus discussion among employees, the scale was confirmed to cover seven dimensions with 74 questions. The seven dimensions include salary satisfaction, democratic harmony, job competence, inner motivation, toughness and optimism, work-life balance, and work acceptability. Regarding the second aspect, a six-dimensional scale developed in Taiwan by Lin (1992) to measure OCB and an 11-dimension scale developed in Hong Kong by Farh (1998) to measure OCB were used. In combination with features of Chinese employees, five dimensions—namely, public-private distinction, identification with the organization, professional dedication, protection of the enterprise's resources, and interpersonal harmony—captured with 22 questions were selected to measure OCB. Regarding the third aspect, on the basis of logical relationships, a SEM was built to formulate factors that influence employee well-being and OCB. Based on methods such as data substitution and model assessment, related conclusions were drawn. The content of the entire questionnaire was divided into three sections related to employee well-being, OCB and personal data. Items of the questionnaire were answered with a Likert six-point scale with the following responses: completely not compliant, mostly not compliant, somewhat not compliant, somewhat compliant, mostly compliant, and completely compliant. Scores for each answer ranged from 1 to 6.

The SEM that was employed to describe the relationship between employee well-being and OCB included 11 latent variables and 34 observed variables. The latent variables covered employee well-being, OCB, salary satisfaction, democratic harmony, inner incentive, toughness and optimism, work-life balance, work acceptability, public-private distinction, identification with the organization, professional dedication, and interpersonal harmony. The six descriptive factors included 18 observed variables among the latent variables related to employee well-being, whereas the resulting latent variables related to OCB included 16 observed variables.

Procedure

To guarantee validity and reliability, a pretest was conducted on a randomly selected sample of 200 employees who were contacted by email. The sequence of the main variables in the questionnaire was randomized to avoid common method variance (CMV) and decrease the occurrence of the consistency motif among the respondents. Each question in the questionnaire appeared to be unrelated to other questions to prevent the respondents from predicting the relationships among them. The average age of the respondents was 25.25 (SD=1.41), and 67% were females. Next, SPSS 20.0 was used to analyze the reliability and factors of the questionnaire. As the results revealed, seven valid factors could be synthesized from all the indexes, and the characteristic value for each of the factors was greater than 1. Nevertheless, job competence was removed as a latent variable because its factor loading was below 0.4 (the critical value). The scales used to measure OCB included five valid factors, and the characteristic value for each of the factors was greater than 1. However, protection of the enterprise's resources was removed as a latent variable because its factor loading was also below the ordinary critical value (0.4). Therefore, the questionnaire used to measure employee well-being ultimately included the following six dimensions: salary satisfaction, democratic harmony, inner motivation, work-life balance, toughness and optimism, and work acceptability. Each dimension included three observed variables, yielding a total of 18 variables. The questionnaire to measure OCB included four dimensions: public-private distinction, identification with the enterprise, professional dedication and interpersonal harmony. Each dimension covered four observed variables, yielding a total of 16 variables. The following eight observed variables were used to collect personal data: sex, age, highest academic credentials, working experience, job position, nature of employment, marital status, and income. After many repeated tests, the amended questionnaire was shown to have improved reliability.

Results and Discussion

Preliminary Analysis

AMOS 8.0 was used to analyze the reliability and validity of the SEM. For the measures of employee well-being, the analysis of the SEM yielded the following results: the composite reliability for salary satisfaction was 0.940, with an average variance extracted (AVE) of 0.501; the composite reliability for democratic harmony was 0.944, with an AVE of 0.50; the composite reliability for inner incentive was 0.917, with an AVE of 0.500; the composite reliability for toughness and optimism was 0.831, with an AVE of 0.586; the composite reliability for work-life balance was 0.812, with an AVE of 0.500; and the composite reliability for work acceptability was 0.840, with an AVE of 0.500.

For the measures of OCB, the analysis of the SEM yielded the following results: the composite reliability for public-private distinction was 0.883, with an AVE of 0.655; the composite reliability for professional dedication was 0.771, with an AVE of 0.566; the composite reliability for identification with the organization was 0.830, with an AVE of 0.558; and the composite reliability for interpersonal harmony was 0.740, with an AVE of 0.505.

Based on testing standards, the SEM in this study was shown to have adequate validity and reliability.

Model validation

To support the SEM parameter estimation and hypothesis tests, SPSS 20.0 and AMOS 8.0 were used to analyze the validity and reliability of the model. According to the related literature, composite reliability should exceed 0.60 (Hair, 1998), and AVE should exceed 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

To assess the fit of the experimental data with the model, the SEM was assessed with respect to indexes measuring the overall model fit (OMF). The OMF was assessed to determine the overall model's degree of fit with the observed data, as assessed by indexes such as the absolute fit index and relative fit index. The absolute fit index mainly included χ^2, degrees of freedom (df), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) values. In general, χ^2/df was used as an index to assess the degree of model fit. If χ^2/df was under three, the OMF was considered good. Further, GFI and AGFI values closer to 1 indicate better OMF. A sum of GFI and AGFI values greater than 0.90 also indicates better OMF. Moreover, a RMSEA value closer to 0 denotes better fit for the entire model, with a RMSEA value below 0.08 indicating ideal model fit. The relative fit index mainly included the normed fit index (NFI) and comparative fit index (CFI). NFI and RFI values closer to 1 indicate better model fit, and a sum of NFI and RFI values greater than 0.9 indicates ideal model fit.

Formal analysis: Testing the hypothesized models

Analysis of the employee well-being model.

Consistent with the research design, a submodel for employee well-being was established. The relationship between employee well-being and its six descriptive dimensions is depicted in Fig. 2.

Fig. 2: Relationship between employee well-being and its six descriptive dimensions.

(1) Parameter estimation. First, AMOS 8.0 was used to analyze the submodel for employee well-being. As shown by the parameter estimation results, the critical ratio (C.R.) values for the index variables corresponding to each factor were greater than 1.96, with P values showing obvious significance. These results suggest that the variables can adequately explain their corresponding factors. Regarding the submodel, the correlation coefficients for employee well-being with salary satisfaction, democratic harmony, inner incentive, toughness

and optimism, and work acceptability were 0.633, 0.816, 0.844, 0.666, 0.667, and 0.927, respectively. Moreover, each C.R. value was greater than 1.96, with each P value showing obvious significance. The aforementioned six factors were thus shown to have strong relationships with employee well-being. Moreover, the indexes very strongly explained the latent variables and exhibited very strong causal relationships among themselves.

(2) Overall model fit. The OMF was used to assess the overall fit of the models with the observed data, and an absolute fit index and a relative fit index were used for this purpose. The absolute fit index mainly included χ^2, df, GFI, AGFI, and RMSEA values. In general, χ^2/df was used as an index to assess the degree of model fit. If χ^2/df was below 3, the OMF was considered good. GFI and AGFI valued closer to 1 indicate better OMF. A sum of GFI and AGFI valued above 0.90 indicates ideal model fit. Moreover, a RMSEA value closer to 0 indicates better OMF, with a RMSEA value below 0.08 suggesting ideal model fit. The relative fit index mainly included NFI and CFI. NFI and RFI values closer to 1 indicate better OMF. Moreover, a sum of NFI and RFI values above 0.9 suggest ideal model fit.

Regarding the submodel for employee well-being, the fit indexes were as follows: χ^2/df =1.84, RMR=0.05, GFI=0.93, AGFI=0.90, NFI=0.94, RFI=0.93, and RMSEA=0.05. Based on the results for the fit indexes for employee well-being, various indexes met the recommended levels for model fit, and all the OMF indexes reached acceptable levels. Therefore, the OMF was considered good. In addition, the theoretical model adequately fit the sample data, indicating that the hypothesized model is acceptable.

Analysis of the OCB model.

Based on the research design, a submodel for OCB was established to describe the relationship between OCB and its four dimensions (Fig. 3).
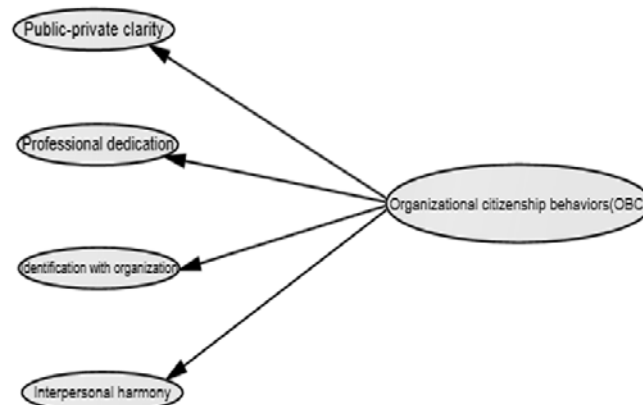

Fig. 3: Relationship between OCB and its four descriptive dimensions.

(1) Parameter estimation. AMOS 8.0 was used to analyze the OCB submodel. As the parameter estimation results showed, the C.R. values for the index variables corresponding to each factor were greater than 1.96, with P values showing obvious significant effects. These results indicate that the index variables can adequately explain their corresponding factors. Regarding the OCB submodel, the correlation coefficients for employee well-being with public-private distinction, organizational identification, professional dedication, and

interpersonal harmony were 0.873, 0.916, 0.720, and 0.314, respectively. Moreover, each C.R. value was greater than 1.96, with each P value showing obvious significance. The aforementioned dimensions adequately explained the latent variables, and their relationships were strongly causal.

(2) Overall model fit. Regarding the OMF of the OCB submodel, the fit indexes were as follows: χ^2 / df =1.87, RMR=0.05, GFI=0.94, AGFI=0.91, NFI=0.91, RFI=0.90, and RESEA=0.05. Based on the results for the OCB fit indexes, several indexes met the recommended levels for model fit and reached an acceptable level, indicating that the OMF was good. In addition, the theoretical model adequately fit the sample data, indicating that the hypothesized model is acceptable.

SEM analysis.

The overall measurement model in the study contains six verified descriptive factors affecting employee well-being and four descriptive factors influencing OCB. In consideration of the foregoing, the overall SEM was confirmed to have adequate validity and reliability, and various data for the descriptive factors were substituted into the SEM (Fig. 1). Maximum likelihood estimation in AMOS 8.0 was used to calculate fit indexes for the SEM, determine the various paths (Fig. 4), and estimate the parameters (Table 1).

Regarding the assumptions made herein, the following results were obtained: the coefficient for the salary satisfaction $\rightarrow$ OCB output path was estimated to be -0.02 (C.R. value=-1.34 and P>0.05); the coefficient for the democratic harmony$\rightarrow$ OCB output path was estimated to be 0.01 (C.R. value=0.83 and P>0.05); the coefficient for the inner incentive $\rightarrow$ OCB output path was estimated to be -0.02 (C.R. value=-1.34 and P>0.05); and the coefficient for the work-life balance$\rightarrow$ OCB output path was estimated to be -0.01 (C.R. value=0.64 and P>0.05). Because none of these coefficients was statistically significant, the hypotheses regarding output paths cannot be supported. However, the coefficient for the toughness and optimism$\rightarrow$ OCB output path was estimated to be 0.15 (C.R. value=2.85 and P<0.01); because this coefficient was statistically significant, the hypothesis regarding this path can be supported. Regarding the model fit indexes, χ^2 / df =3.39, RMR=0.25, GFI=0.70, NFI=0.75, and RESEA=0.08. All these indexes generally meet the recommended levels for model fit, and the overall fit indexes generally show acceptable levels. These results indicate that the OMF was good. As the theoretical model generally fit the sample data, the hypothesis model is acceptable.
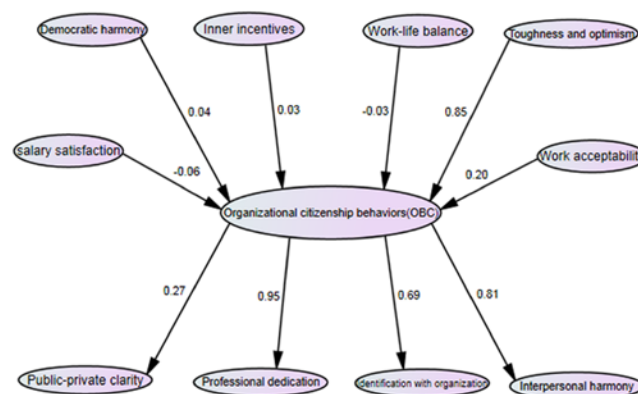

Fig. 4: Diagram of the output paths of the SEM for employee well-being and OCB.

Table 1: Results of the parameter estimation for the SEM used to analyze employee well-being and OCB

Path relations (hypothesis)	Influencing direction	Estimation	C.R	P	Results
OCB ⟵ salary satisfaction	negative	-0.06	-1.34	0.18	not supporting
OCB ⟵ democratic harmony	positive	0.04	0.83	0.41	not supporting
OCB ⟵ inner incentives	positive	0.03	0.64	0.52	not supporting
OCB ⟵ work-life balance	negative	-0.03	-0.64	0.52	not supporting
OCB ⟵ toughness and optimism	positive	0.85	4.07	***	supporting
OCB ⟵ work acceptability	positive	0.20	2.85	**	supporting

Note: *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; and * $p < 0.05$. A two-sided test was adopted.

Conclusion

In this study, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were used to analyze factors that influence employee well-being and their relationships with OCB. The study also examines the factors that affect employee well-being and analyzes the relationship between employee well-being and OCB.

The confirmatory factor analysis of the SEM for employee well-being showed that employee well-being comprises salary satisfaction, democratic harmony, inner motivation, work-life balance, toughness and optimism, and work acceptability. Each coefficient for the path for work acceptability, inner motivation and democratic harmony was greater than 0.80, indicating that these three factors can very strongly explain employee well-being. Moreover, each coefficient for the path for work-life balance, toughness and optimism, and salary satisfaction was greater than 0.60, indicating these three factors can also explain employee well-being. These results demonstrate that employee well-being can be measured by using the following six factors: work acceptability, inner motivation, democratic harmony, work-life balance, toughness and optimism, and salary satisfaction. This finding is generally consistent with results obtained in previous studies. For example, Chen and Jia (2013) found that a positive relationship exists between salary satisfaction and job satisfaction and suggested that a positive relationship exists between work acceptability and employee performance. Further, Xie and Sun (2012) noted that high achievement is needed to reinforce the relationship between performance-based pay and salary satisfaction. Chen *et al.* (2014) also noted that employees can improve their satisfaction with their job, their family and themselves by balancing their work and life to enhance their well-being.

A five-factor scale developed in Hong Kong by Fan has some limitations on research objects in this study. The results show that the four factors influencing OCB include public-private distinction, identification with the organization, professional dedication, and interpersonal harmony. Based on these results, a measurement scale consisting of these four factors was developed to measure OCB.

According to the analysis of the SEM paths, the coefficient for the influence of employee well-being on OCB is 0.36, indicating that employee well-being has significantly positive effects on OCB. Nevertheless,

salary satisfaction, democratic harmony, inner motivation, and work-life balance do not have obvious positive effects on OCB. Regarding the effect of salary satisfaction on OCB, there are certain differences between the current study and previous studies. For example, in a study on civil servants, Han and Li (2013) found that allowances and bonuses play a mediating role in the relationship between procedural justice and OCB. Moreover, in a study on scientific research personnel, Wang and Xu (2011) showed that work-life balance is related to organizational performance. The differences between these studies and the current study might be related to the research objects, as this study used enterprise staff as the target respondents. The current study also demonstrates that a two-factor theory is also applicable to employees of Chinese enterprises.

Implications

If an organization hopes to enhance employee well-being, behavior and performance, it must focus on not only external factors (such as salary satisfaction or work-life balance) but also internal factors (such as inner motivation or toughness and optimism) that affect employees. In addition, good interpersonal relations, democratic harmony, and superiors' efficient and timely work acceptance with respect to subordinates are non-negligible factors that can enhance employee well-being. The result of this study demonstrate that enterprise administrators should not only consider employees' cultural backgrounds and unique universal values that exhibit Chinese features but also focus on positive incentives for employees that foster their spiritual care and personal growth.

Employee well-being obviously influences OCB, as a healthy and happy mentality helps employees reproduce OCB. Furthermore, organizational and personal behavior enhances employees' commitment to the organization and improves their performance. In addition, such behaviors reduce unnecessary potential expenses and decrease an enterprise's operations costs, which contribute indirect value. The results of this study show that salary satisfaction and work-life balance do not exert a significant influence on OCB. These results should remind enterprise administrators that a good mentality, toughness and optimism are favorable characteristics for employees to possess to foster OCB, whereas self inspiration cannot impose better influences at the purely personal level. A superior's affirmation, care and inspiration with respect to subordinates can encourage enthusiasm among employees and enhance their performance. Good interpersonal relationships enhance employee well-being only inside an organization; however, they cannot effectively influence OCB. Based on the results of this study, if an enterprise hopes to induce employees to work more actively, it must focus on their higher-level demands to attain better motivational effects.

Conflict of interest

The authors have none to declare.

Acknowledgements

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