

An Analysis of the Relationship of Career Calling, Career Commitment and Job Satisfaction on Knowledge Employees

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Abstract—Career calling has been widely discussed by scholars in the field of organizational behavior in recent years. Based on the Chinese context, this paper analyses the influence of career calling of knowledge employees on job satisfaction and their mechanism of action. It arrives at the conclusion that career calling of knowledge-based employees has a positive impact on job satisfaction; in addition, career calling plays a significant role in job satisfaction through career commitment. It analyses the conclusion of western studies on career calling. It not only enriches the theoretical basis of career calling in Chinese context, but also has significant guiding for knowledge-based employees to stimulate their subjective initiative. Besides, this article also provides a new perspective for enterprise managers to manage employees from the perspective of career calling.

Keywords—knowledge-based employee; career calling; career commitment; job satisfaction

I. INTRODUCTION

With the advent of economy-intensive society, knowledge-based employees play an increasingly important role in the development of society. Their motivation to work will be affected by various factors including external factors and internal factors. Because of their special education background, knowledge-based employees are more willing to exert their subjective initiative to stimulate their inner vitality and realize their value in the process of work. However, with the acceleration of the pace of society, people will face all kinds of pressure, especially for knowledge workers, leading to that their job satisfaction will be seriously affected. If people are motivated to work through external conditions, there are obviously no remarkable effects.

Career calling is a new perspective to discuss how to improve career commitment and job satisfaction. Firstly, it is of great significance to enrich the theoretical basis of career calling. Secondly, from the perspective of reality, having a deep understanding of career calling will be conducive to the cultivation, perception and realization of their career calling, thus laying a solid foundation for career development. On the other hand, managers can motivate the enthusiasms of staffs, and improve staffs' organizational commitment. This way has been not only invaluable to reduce the management cost of enterprise, but also largely improve the organization's

economic performance, thus improving the competitiveness of the enterprise in the industry and promoting its sustainable development in the competitive society.

II. RELATED CONCEPTS

A. Knowledge-based Employee

The term "knowledge worker" was first proposed by management guru Peter Ducker in his book "milestones of tomorrow" and defined as "those who deeply grasp and use symbols and concepts to work with knowledge or information". Compared with ordinary employees, knowledge employees' work content, talent type and workplace are different. Firstly, knowledge-based employees refer to the workers who have and apply their creativity to engage in mental work to create wealth for the enterprise. Secondly, management personnel, financial personnel and marketing personnel in the enterprise are the category of knowledge-based employees. From the perspective of talent types, professional and technical personnel and management personnel in enterprises belong to the category of knowledge-based employees. From the workplace, knowledge-based employees are basically engaged in national enterprises, institutions, hospitals and so on.

B. Career Calling

Calling has developed from religion, sociology, career psychology to management, having been given specific connotations in various fields. Since the 21st century, the sense of calling has gradually attracted extensive attention from career psychology and organizational behavior. Davidson, et al. (1994) defined calling as a satisfying specific career according to the will of God. Hall & Chandler (2005) believed that the sense of calling is that individuals made efforts to pursue their inner favorite and meaningful career by combining the talents with the knowledge they had attained. In addition, it had been defined as a transcendent calling from and beyond the self by various scholars, that was to say, if one had a deep understanding of calling, he would perform the responsibilities assigned by specific life roles in a specific way to experience the sense of meaning and pro-social goals(Dik et al. 2009).

C. Career Commitment

Since the 1980s, career commitment has aroused the research of foreign scholars, and it has two viewpoints: attitude theory and motivation theory. From the perspective of motivation theory, London (1983) defined it as the motivation intensity of employees to realize their own value and achieve career success based on their recognition of their occupation. Blau (1985) defined it as an individual's attitude towards career from the perspective of attitude; he believed that career commitment was mainly based on the emotional level, the degree to which employees liked their current career and their subjective desire to change the occupation.

D. Job Satisfaction

Taylor, the great "father of modern management", believed that activities that could realize the value of individuals could improve their job satisfaction. Since then, scholars around the world have begun to pay close attention to job satisfaction. Locke (1969) defined it as a kind of psychological pleasure generated by employees in the process of work. When employees made horizontal and vertical evaluations of the work they were engaged in, they would have a relatively positive feeling and it meant the job satisfaction. Wexley (1983) believed that job satisfaction was essentially a psychological feeling, which referred to the reaction and attitude of employees after comprehensive evaluation of their work.

III. RELATIONSHIP ANALYSIS

A. Career Calling and Career Commitment

Hirschi (2011) believed that the reason why the sense of professional mission had positive organizational consequences was that people with the sense of career calling had a higher sense of professional commitment, and therefore focused on their career development to a large extent. Duffy et al. (2011) investigated and studied 370 university teachers, and the results showed that the sense of professional mission positively affected the sense of career commitment. In addition, he also concluded that career calling could improve organizational commitment by improving the sense of professional commitment of university teachers.

B. Career Calling and Job Satisfaction

Davidson & Caddell (1994) firstly discussed the relevant outcome variables of career calling in the organizational field. The results showed that career calling positively affected employees' job satisfaction. Duffy, Autin, Allan and Douglass (2015) provided strong evidence for the study of the close relationship between career calling and job satisfaction by conducting a three-month follow-up survey on employees, besides, all these scholars used different measurement tools to show that career calling had a positive impact on job satisfaction. Xie et al. (2016) analyzed 832 employees at two time points and find that career calling is positively correlated with job satisfaction.

C. Career Commitment and Job Satisfaction

Cardador, Dane & Pratt (2011) believed that an individual's positive attitude towards career identification would improve his/her job satisfaction and thus reduced his/her turnover intention. On this basis, studies of Duffy, Bott, Allan (2012) showed that the level of professional commitment was directly related to the satisfaction of employees at work. If an employee had a high degree of identification with his/her occupation, his/her feelings on work would not be affected by external conditions, such as salary, promotion and so on. On the contrary, when they choose their career, they would follow their inner voice to do the work they identified with.

D. Career Calling, Career Commitment and Job Satisfaction

Duffy et al. (2011) found that career commitment completely mediated the influence of career calling on job satisfaction. On this basis, Duffy et al. (2012) believed that the positive impact of career calling on job satisfaction was based on individuals' strong sense that they were practicing in the way of inner requirements, only in this way could career calling play a role in job satisfaction through career commitment. Han Xue et al. (2018) drew similar conclusions based on the analysis of 215 employee data in stages according to self-determination theory and career construction theory. That was to say, individuals with a high sense of career calling had an indirect effect on job satisfaction through career commitment. Besides, based on self-determination theory, Ye Long (2018) analyzed 359 knowledge workers from 24 provinces, suggesting that highly professional calling individuals in the concrete practice process would have high self-efficacy, as a result of higher self-efficacy directly affecting recognition to the career, besides, the degree of professional approval, in turn, it would have certain influence on job satisfaction.

E. General Conceptual Framework

According to the extant literature, career calling is a passion that an individual believes that he/she should follow his/her inner voice to engage in activities that he/she believes are meaningful and valuable to the society. It is divided into three dimensions, including transcendental calling, sense of meaning and pro-social behavior. It emphasizes more on the subjective initiative of an individual, and its level will not change with the change of external conditions. Career commitment is an individuals' subjective feeling of the occupation he/she is engaged in. At the same time, there is a certain difference between career commitment and organizational commitment. Career commitment does not affect career commitment due to organizational change. Job satisfaction refers to an individual's subjective feelings after a comprehensive evaluation of his or her occupation. On the basis of literature review and analysis, the conceptual framework of the relationship among career calling, career commitment and job satisfaction was proposed (see "Fig. 1").



Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework.

IV. CONCLUSION

This article analyses the relationship among career calling, career commitment and job satisfaction of knowledge-based employees, and finally comes to the conclusion that career calling plays a significant role in job satisfaction through career commitment, indicating that the cultivation of career calling plays an important role in improving job satisfaction through career commitment. This article not only enriches the application of career calling theory in knowledge-based employees, but also provides a new perspective for enterprise managers.

Specifically, this article has the following theoretical significance. It improves the management theory of knowledge-based employees. In this article, knowledge-based employees are selected as the research objects, and we find that career calling has an obvious predictive effect on job satisfaction, and career calling has an indirect effect on job satisfaction through career commitment. In addition, it enriches and verifies the western theories on the mechanism of career calling on job satisfaction. This study verified the influence of career calling on job satisfaction and the mediating effect of career commitment on career calling and job satisfaction in the context of China, enriching the theories of career calling in the west, and how to stimulate the work enthusiasm of knowledge-based employees from the heart will be a new theoretical topic. According to the conclusion of this paper, career calling has a positive impact on the job satisfaction of knowledge-based employees. The higher the level of career calling of knowledge-based employees, the higher the corresponding level of career commitment will be, and the greater the job satisfaction will be. All these conclusions inspire managers to attach importance to finding measures to stimulate employees' work enthusiasm from the perspective of career calling.

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