

Influence of Employee's Expectancy to Operational Efficiency of SMEs in Dalian City, China

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Abstract

Any business organization that will be able to succeed steadily and for a long time will find that employees who work hard for the organization play an essential part in making the organization successful. This research article aims (1) to study job characteristics that affect work efficiency, (2) to study a new model to improve operational efficiency, and (3) to develop a model of the work efficiency of employees in the organization. This study uses a mixed research method with a group of 400 samples. Tools used. To collect data as a questionnaire. Most quantitative questionnaires were sent through post-post, individual, and in-depth interviews. Descriptive statistics and content analysis were used to analyze the data. The research findings were as follows:

1. Regarding the impact of work characteristics on the work efficiency of small and medium-sized enterprises, the research found that we can use the intermediate variable motivation factors affecting expectations to conduct research. Employee work can be determined through wages and benefits, job security, the work environment, and relationships with superiors and supervisors—relationships with colleagues affect work efficiency.

2. In the original conceptual framework, we have a total of 7 assumptions, among which job characteristic has a direct impact on motivation factors affecting expectation and also have a direct impact on work engagement and operational, but with the help of the SEM model, we found that the second hypothesis: job characteristics have a positive impact on operational efficiency, the current value is -0.87 , so it can be concluded that hypothesis 2 is not valid. So, the new model can remove assumption two and keep other assumptions.

3. Regarding the development model to improve the operational efficiency of organizational employees, we only need to cancel the job characteristic that directly impacts operational efficiency.

Keywords: Employee's Expectancy; Operational Efficiency; SMEs

Introduction

With ever-increasing market competition, organizations' competitive environment is rapidly changing. With ever-increasing market competition, organizations' competitive environment is rapidly changing. Organizations must constantly improve their innovation capabilities and the diversity of products and services. Moreover, technology has promoted the rapid development of social productivity. Moreover, the new economic development situation is both an opportunity and a challenge for Chinese enterprises. Organizations must constantly improve their innovation capabilities with the diversity of products and services.

Moreover, technology has promoted the rapid development of social productivity. Moreover, the new economic development situation is both an opportunity and a challenge for Chinese enterprises (Zhang, 2022). In order to get the opportunity for better development, employees are the foundation of organizational development. To improve these capabilities in the final analysis, internal employees must achieve. Employees are the foundation of a business and the key to its success. People are the most active among the three factors of productivity; employees are all the human resources of an enterprise (Chiang & Jang, 2008), and human capital is the most important capital.

Therefore, only by organically combining human capital with the material resources of an enterprise can an enterprise effectively create wealth and have economic and social benefits. Now, our country has gradually entered the knowledge economy era; in the knowledge economy era, human resources, especially outstanding talent, have been unprecedentedly placed in the most critical position (Linjee et al., 2023). More and more countries and enterprises believe that talent is the key to the success of enterprises and spare no effort to improve and implement more effective policies on personnel (Boonyapraropchai & Premthongsuk, 2023). In the era of the knowledge economy, enterprises urgently need many excellent employees to meet the needs of more fierce market competition. Therefore, modern enterprise management must recruit suitable and retain excellent employees (He & Sun, 2023). In this context, motivating and stimulating their work enthusiasm is necessary to retain employees. Therefore, effectively mobilizing the enthusiasm of enterprise employees is a critical issue.

It is found that highly motivated employees can create unprecedented value for the company. Moreover, it is one of the most potent weapons in competition. This enthusiasm is not the only icing when the organization is running successfully. However, the hard work of employees who unite when the organization is going through hardships. This often forces organizations to focus on motivated employees and have high expectations of the organization.

This research selects small and medium enterprises in Dalian. China's Liaoning Province is a coastal city. It has a rapid economic development and a good climate. It has a significant advantage in northeast China. As a result, many entrepreneurs are interested in setting up a company. Therefore, the number of mid-sized enterprises in Dalian has increased dramatically in the past few years. However, staff enthusiasm needs to be improved.

Moreover, the employee turnover rate is high. The findings are that the organization's existing incentives must meet employee expectations. Therefore, there are problems such as insufficient incentives. These problems all lead to the phenomenon of poor operational efficiency of the organization. This has a severe impact on the sustainable development of the organization.

Research Objectives

1. To study job characteristics that affect work efficiency
2. To study new model style to improve operational efficiency
3. To develop a model of operational efficiency of employees in the organization

Literature Review

1. SME related information

Ciemleja and Lace (2011) said small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are socially and economically important for their national economies since they represent about 99 percent of all active enterprises in the European Union.

Culkin and Smith (2008) said SMEs contribute significantly to a country's gross domestic product, national employment, and export performance.

Chen (2006) pointed out that small and medium-sized enterprises account for about 33% of the total number of people in the wholesale and retail industry and play a vital role in facilitating the circulation of goods.

Cook and Nixon (2000) said SMEs play an essential role in the development process, such as encouraging entrepreneurship and employing labor-intensive technologies for job creation. They can often be quickly established and put into operation, producing quick returns. More generally, the development of SMEs.

From the above information, small and medium-sized businesses (Small and Medium Enterprises = SMEs) refer to entrepreneurs as natural persons. A body of persons or a non-juristic ordinary partnership Limited Partnership, Limited Company, or Joint Venture which will operate the business of selling goods, producing goods, or providing services

2. Theory of job characteristic

Hackman and Oldham (1976, 1980) proposed the job characteristics theory to suggest that five job characteristics produce critical psychological states in the job holder, ultimately resulting in positive work-related outcomes.

2.1) Skill variety

Skill variety opens a new window that reflects the degree to which a job involves various activities that demand the use of a wide variety of the job holder's skills and abilities. For example, a routine, repetitious assembly-line job needs to be more varied, whereas an applied research position entails working on new problems daily.

2.2) Task identity

Task identity opens in a new window, which is the extent to which the job holder feels he or she is responsible for the completion of a whole and indefinable piece of work, that is, doing a job from beginning to end with a visible outcome. For instance, a chef who prepares an entire meal has more task identity than a worker on a cafeteria line who ladles mashed potatoes.

2.3) Task significance

Task significance opens a new window concerning the degree to which the job is perceived as necessary and substantially impacts the lives or work of other people, whether in the immediate organization or the external environment. For instance, people who distribute penicillin and other medical supplies during an emergency would feel they have significant jobs.

2.4) Autonomy

Autonomy opens a new window, which means the degree to which the job provides

substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling the work and determining the procedures to carry it out. A house painter, for instance, can determine how to paint the house; a paint sprayer on an assembly line has little autonomy.

2.5) Feedback

Feedback opens a new window to the extent to which carrying out the work activities required by the job provides information back to the job holder about the effectiveness of his or her performance.

In conclusion, job characteristics mean recognition of 5 dimensions of work features : a variety of skills, continuity of work, the importance of work freedom, and feedback from work.

3. Theory of Motivation Factors Affecting Expectation

A broad range of motivational theories derived from motivation research, such as self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2020), expectancy-value theory, achievement goal theory (Senko et al., 2011), and control-value theory (Pekrun et al., 2017) have been widely applied to understand the contextual and psychological factors that optimize students' learning and engagement. These relevant theories have been successfully applied to understand the underlying environmental and psychological factors that affect learners' motivation, engagement, and learning. When pedagogical design adequately addresses these needs, students are actively motivated to engage in learning tasks.

4. Theory of work engagement

Kanungo (1982) said work engagement refers to a person's positive attitude towards work and feeling that work is meaningful. I also feel that I can manage the tasks I pursue. I pointed out work engagement. Work commitments happen from thoughts and feelings. People's thoughts drive behavior, which is generally discussed but not self-evident.

5. Theory of operational efficiency

Herzberg et al. (2011). referred to the concept of gives the meaning of " business management efficiency " in a narrow sense that it is a cost reduction in production and in a broad sense that it is the quality of effectiveness com, pretense, and capacity in operation business that is considered to be the most effective is to be able to produce quality products or services in the right amount of demand the least cost to take into account the situation and existing financial commitments (Onraksa & Lekhavat, 2023).) therefore, the term business efficiency concept has five components: cost, quality, quantity, and production method.

6. Theory of expectancy

Vroom (1970) suggested that the relationship between people's behavior at work and their goals was more complex than was first imagined by other scientists. Vroom realized that an employee's performance is based on individual factors such as personality, skills, knowledge, experience, and abilities.

The expectancy-value model of achievement motivations served as the theoretical framework for this study. It is a parsimonious framework and is one of the most widely adopted theories for studying student motivation in science and mathematics (Abraham & Barker, 2014; Jiang et al., 2018). This theory embodies two primary theoretical constructs affecting individuals' achievement motivation. On the one hand, expectancies of success are conceptualized as internal beliefs about the ability to perform a task or activity successfully.

In conclusion, expectancy theory proposes aligning goal setting with individual needs. Expectancy theory assumes that individuals are thoughtful, rational beings. They have

In this survey, the study divided the questionnaire into five parts,

Part 1: This part is personal information, such as gender, age, education level, job position, working years, and other related information so that you can learn from different cultural levels; people in different jobs are analyzed to collect samples of breadth and generality.

Part 2: This part is the information about the job characteristics of Dalian SMEs. In this part, I discuss five aspects: skill variety, task identification, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. This part contains 16 questions.

Part 3: This part is information about motivation factors affecting the expectations of Dalian SMEs. It includes salary and welfare, work security, working environment, and relationship with supervisor and colleague. There are 28 questions in this part.

Part 4: This part is the information about operational efficiency. It includes personal and performance. In this part, we have eight questions that need to be selected.

Part 5: This part is information about the work engagement of Dalian SMEs, including vigor, dedication, and absorption. In this part, we have 17 questions.

The statistics used in data analysis: Data collection and questionnaire analysis were divided into five parts. The first part of the questionnaire included personal data, which could be analyzed by frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The study uses the Likert scale for the data from the questionnaire's second to fifth parts. The study analyzes the SEM models to verify the validity of the proposed model.

Qualitative Research: For the qualitative part, the study employed open-ended interviews, speech-based observations, literature reviews, and news exploring concepts and theories.

Population and Sample: The sample consisted of eight informants: managers, supervisors, and personnel leaders of small and medium enterprises.

Research Tools: The study used interviews, which is recognized as a proper qualitative method. Interview methodology refers to a qualitative research method in which interviewees and interviewees communicate directly to explore and speculate on a particular problem. Researchers designed open-ended questions. This type of question allows researchers to ask questions freely about specific problems. Moreover, respondents may provide additional information.

The statistics used in data analysis: To analyze the content and purpose of the interviews, the researchers extracted information provided by eight interviewees, and organize relevant personnel to analyze and deal with the following:

1) Information is grouped according to the interview records according to the four parts of the conceptual framework: Job characteristics, motivation factors affecting expectations, operational efficiency, and work engagement.

2) Collect and complete the respondents' answers.

3) Collect the critical points answered by all interviewees, analyze and summarize them according to the conceptual framework, and write the result report.

Research Results

The study collected 400 returned surveys. The specific analysis results were as follows: Show the number and percentage of respondents classified by gender in Table 1.

Table 1. Displays the gender information of the respondents.

Gender	Amount	percentage
Male	120	30.00
Female	280	70.00
total	400	100.00

From Table 1, it was found that most of the female respondents accounted for 70.00 percent, and males accounted for 30.00 percent. Due to the large number of women in Dalian, the number of women selected during the questionnaire is also relatively large.

Table 2 shows the number and percentage of respondents classified by age.

Table 2. Respondents' age information

Age	Amount	percentage
Under 30 years old	226	56.50
30-40 years old	103	25.75
40-50 years old	51	12.75
Over 50 years old	20	5.00
Total	400	100.00

From Table 2, it was found that more than half of the respondents were under 30 years old, more than a quarter of the respondents were between 30 and 40 years old, 12.75 percent were between 40 and 50 years old, and the remaining 5 percent of respondents were over 50 years old.

Analysis of opinion data about job characteristics are presented in the following tables.

Table 3. The mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of skill variety

Skill variety	\bar{X}	S.D.	opinion level
1. Use a variety of knowledge and skills in operations	3.89	0.87	Agree
2. You can assign tasks according to your professional knowledge	3.89	0.89	Agree
3. Your work is constantly updated	4.05	0.79	Agree
Total	3.94	0.85	Agree

From Table 3, the mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of skill variety, it was found that the respondents' opinions about skill variety were at an agreed level ($\bar{X} = 3.94$, $SD = 0.85$).

Table 4. The mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of task identification

task identification	\bar{X}	S.D.	opinion level
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4. You have the opportunity to work on projects that interest you. Question 4	4.07	0.81	Agree
5. You have the opportunity to develop and improve your work	4.08	0.81	Agree
6. Take pride in the work assigned	4.29	0.91	Strongly Agree
Total	4.15	0.84	Agree

From Table 4, the mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of task identification, it was found that the respondents' opinions about task identification a agree level ($\bar{X} = 4.15$, $SD = 0.84$)

Table 5. The mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of task significance

task significance	\bar{X}	S.D.	opinion level
7. The nature of your work is challenging	3.84	0.90	Agree
8. The work you do is meaningful and essential to other people	3.90	0.90	Agree
9. You can achieve a state of great satisfaction with the results of your work	4.11	0.75	Agree
10. Take pride in every job you get done	4.40	0.82	Strongly Agree
Total	4.06	0.84	Agree

From Table 5, the mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of task significance, it was found that the respondents' opinions about task significance were at an agreed level ($\bar{X} = 4.06$, $SD = 0.84$).

Table 6. The mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of autonomy

autonomy	\bar{X}	S.D.	opinion level
11. You can work from start to finish by yourself	3.93	0.90	Agree
12. You can work independently	4.23	0.68	Strongly Agree
13. You can make sound judgments about your decisions	4.44	0.75	Strongly Agree
Total	4.20	0.78	Strongly Agree

From Table 6, the mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of autonomy, it was found that the respondents' opinions about autonomy strongly agree with the level ($\bar{X} = 4.20$, $SD = 0.78$).

Table 7. The mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of feedback

feedback	\bar{X}	S.D.	ระดับความคิดเห็น
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14. You can follow up and report on your work items at any time	4.41	0.80	Strongly Agree
15. Your supervisor will give you work advice	4.09	0.77	Agree
16. Colleagues will give you work advice	3.80	0.89	Agree
total	4.10	0.82	Agree

From Table 7, the mean and standard deviation of the opinion level of feedback, it was found that the respondents' opinions about feedback were at a agree level ($\bar{X} = 4.10$, $SD = 0.82$)

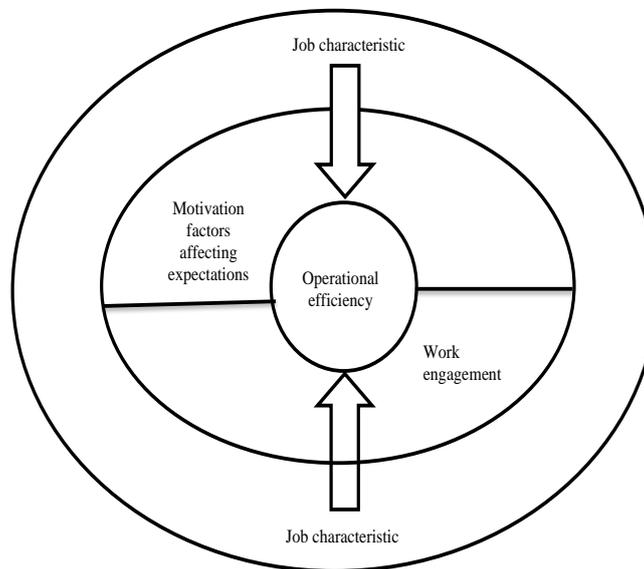
Discussions

The following conclusions can be drawn from the data analysis: Research Objective 1: To study job characteristics affecting work efficiency using quantitative and qualitative research methods. It was found that the nature of work had little direct impact on operational efficiency. However, job characteristics had a positive influence on motivation factors affecting expectations. At the same time, job characteristics positively influenced work engagement. Job characteristics indirectly influenced performance through moderately variable motive factors affecting expectations. Job characteristics indirectly influence operational efficiency through moderately variable workload, which is consistent with the research of Chan et al. (2020) on the relationship between employee engagement and satisfaction in the Hong Kong education system. The authors also distributed questionnaires, recovered questionnaires, and used the SEM model for analysis. The results show that the self-efficacy of TAs is positively related to their job satisfaction through the mediating role of work engagement. In my dissertation research, I used work engagement as an intermediate variable to prove that employee engagement in small and medium-sized enterprises will increase employees' enthusiasm for work, enhance employees' job satisfaction, and thus have a positive impact on corporate operating efficiency, and also consistent with the research of Wood et al. (2020) conducted research on the relationship between work engagement and work-life balance in organizations and found that more and more employers began to create a good working environment allows employees to experience work-life balance. At the same time, they use empirical investigation and analysis to find that employees' work-life balance and work engagement are interrelated. In my thesis, I also mentioned that the working environment, as a motivating factor affecting employee expectations, acts as a bridge between job characteristics and SMEs' operating efficiency. At the same time, work engagement has the same effect.

From the data analysis according to the second research objective, it was found that it was found that job characteristics had a positive influence on operational efficiency. The proposed value is -0.87, so it can be concluded that hypothesis 2 is incorrect. The new model can remove hypothesis 2 and keep the other assumptions. Implement new models to improve organizational operational efficiency. This is consistent with the research of Robijn et al. (2020), who investigated the relationship between engaging leadership and open conflict norms in teams with work engagement. The mediation role of basic needs satisfaction between these relationships is proposed based on self-determination theory. They also used structural equation modeling to score their leaders, teams, and themselves on basic needs satisfaction and engagement, concluding that engaged leadership and overt conflict norms indirectly impacted work engagement by fulfilling basic needs. In my thesis research, work engagement is used as an intermediate variable, which connects the independent variable's work characteristics and the dependent variable's operating efficiency. Ta et al. (2022) researched the influencing factors

of the balanced scorecard to improve the operating efficiency of listed companies; they believe that applying the balanced scorecard will positively impact the efficiency of business operations. Therefore, they also conduct research through a mixed method, combining quantitative and qualitative methods and comprehensively using interviews and questionnaires. The study investigated the impact of applying the balanced scorecard on the operating efficiency of listed companies in Vietnam. The results showed that the higher the application level of the balanced scorecard, the higher the operating efficiency of the enterprise. So far, we have found that not only employee expectations have a particular impact on corporate operating efficiency, but also the level of application of the balanced scorecard has a particular impact on corporate operational efficiency.

Knowledge from Research



Conclusion

According to the research,

1. The job characteristics that employees are assigned affect the efficiency of management within the organization and the motivation to work well.
2. Let the employees receive orders in various fields; they must work in various fields. Assist in the organization and allow unscheduled items. The organization will help other organizations be more efficient in their operations.

Suggestions

From the results of the above research study, recommendations for organizations and government sectors were found as follows:

- 1) Solve the problem of family placement of highly skilled employees. Solving the problem of family placement and medical care will help employees solve their worries and allow them to work better in small and medium-sized enterprises. This is a very realistic problem. Many high-skilled employees are unwilling to work in small and medium-sized enterprises because they feel that the supporting conditions of small and medium-sized

enterprises could be better and help them solve the problems they worry about. In contrast, large enterprises, including foreign-funded enterprises, can better solve them. The work of the employees and their families, the education of their children, etc., so to attract high-skilled employees, we should meet their expectations to ensure that they can work better for the company and improve work efficiency.

2) Government policy aspect: Improve the subsidy policy for high-skilled employees of small and medium-sized enterprises. A more obvious status quo today is that the first choice for high-skilled personnel is often some well-known large-scale enterprises, followed by small and medium-sized enterprises. Therefore, to ensure the healthy and orderly development of small and medium-sized enterprises in Dalian, we should actively absorb excellent high-skilled talents to help small and medium-sized enterprises develop. Therefore, small and medium-sized enterprises should improve high-skilled talent subsidies to help small and medium-sized enterprises accelerate their development.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should explore other organizational issues, such as how technology can increase efficiency. Alternatively, the motivation that affects the performance of the employees will benefit the organization in what areas in this study. Although the list of measurements in the questionnaire survey section was designed concerning the terminology and scale structure involved in the existing research, they were not included in the survey. Scholars have commented on this. However, the universally accepted template has yet to be mentioned.

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