

Modeling self-determination in employee responses to work

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ABSTRACT

Based on self-determination theory and models of demands and resources at work, path analysis of survey data ($N = 1008$) was used to test a model of motivational and health-related responses to work characteristics. Work-related resources and stressful demands were framed as features that facilitate, respectively constrain the fulfillment of basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Motivational and health impairment processes were represented by distinct first-order (work motivation, work strain) and second-order outcomes (affective commitment, psychosomatic symptoms). Workplace alienation was confirmed as a shared second-order outcome of low motivation and high strain. Individual autonomy orientation affected employee responses as expected. Limitations, theoretical issues, and implications for work design are discussed.

Keywords

Self-determination – demands – resources – motivation – health impairment