Literature Review of Occupation Well-being

Teng ZHANG¹,a,* and Chun-ping Li²,b,*

¹,²Business School, Macau University of Science and Technology, Macao, China

ª646376926@qq.com, ⁰1002512588@qq.com

*Corresponding author

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Abstract. Since the 1990s, the study of occupation well-being has become a hot topic for domestic and overseas scholars. They have deeply discussed the occupation well-being from different aspects and till now, a huge amount of valuable theoretical and practical research results have been formed. This thesis analyzes and combs the literature from the perspectives of connotation, measurement and influencing factors of occupation well-being and then puts forward the future research direction.

1. Introduction
The pursuit of well-being is a natural need and the ultimate goal of mankind. However, with the transformation of economic structure and the change of social structure, the roles in the family, work and society have been intertwined and the pressure is increasing day by day. The conflict between work and family has caused generally low well-being of the employees. The problems of sub-health, depression, occupational burnout, overwork death and other issues have become increasingly prominent. In addition, the 18th Party Congress has put forward the new requirement of “Happy China”. Therefore, how to improve the occupation well-being of the employees has become an urgent problem to be solved in the current organization and society. The study of occupation well-being meets the need of era development, and it will also be an effective way to improve the individual well-being and the performance of the organization.

2. Connotation of Occupation Well-being
The study of well-being originated in philosophy, in which the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates had put forward the way to the well-being, which was constantly deepening the process of “self cognition”. Subsequently, Plato pointed out that “well-being was to find a more profound meaning of life”. In 1976, Campbell and others started to study the dimensions of well-being and the one in the work situation, career background and organizational context. Later, the scholars represented by Luthans put forward Positive Organizational Behavior and the study of well-being has been expanded to the fields of management and organizational behavior (Luthans, 2002). In the organization, the study of employees’ well-being has gradually received more attention (Sonnen tag & Ilies, 2002). The concept of occupation well-being was born and became a hot topic both at home and abroad.

At first, some scholars argued that occupation well-being was the positive evaluation of individual for various aspects of their work from the five perspectives of affective, motive, behavioral, cognitive and physical well-being (Joan E. Van. Horn, 2004). Then, the scholars found that the emotional experience was also an important part of occupation well-being besides work evaluation. Ge Xiping (2010) pointed out that occupation well-being was the subjective feelings on the satisfaction of the employees in the positions and the working status. It was also a significant factor constituting the quality of work and life of the employees. Wu Weijiong (2012) and others pointed out that “occupation well-being meant higher work satisfaction and lower willingness to leave, more positive emotions and less negative ones”. He believed that occupation well-being should cover the positive and negative aspects in the two components of cognitive and
emotional experience. With the deepening of discussion, the extension of occupation well-being was continued to expand.

3. Measurement of Occupation Well-being

At the beginning of the study in well-being, the scholars used such questionnaire in the research process “overall, do you feel happy in your life?” to know the general situation of well-being. For example, the US National Health Statistics Center (1977) formulated the General Well Being Schedule. This questionnaire was widely used. With the deepening of the study on well-being, the scholars then developed the scales of subjective well-being, psychological well-being and social well-being to measure the psychological well-being and social well-being of the employees. Later, the employees’ well-being scale (E WB SCALE) developed by Zheng, XM, Zhu, WC, Zhao, HX, & Zhang, C. (2015) made up the lack of domestic empirical research scale, covering 18 questions in the three dimensions of life well-being (LWB), work well-being (WWB) and psychological well-being (PWB).

Through the study and research, the scholars discussed the occupation well-being of different occupations. Van Horn JE, Taris TW, Shaufeli WB, Schreurs R J. (2004) conducted a targeted study on the profession of teachers. Based on 1252 teachers as objects, five-dimensional model of teachers’ occupation well-being was established, in which the dimensions covered affective well-being, professional well-being, social well-being, cognitive well-being and psychosomatic well-being. They also put forward the core of occupation well-being was affective well-being. Li Guihua (2011) analyzed the occupation well-being of the medical workers from the physical and mental health and other four dimensions. Based on the child nurses as the research objects, Andreas Baldschun (2014) measured and analyzed their occupation well-being. Shen Yi and Zhou Zhen (2016) used the overall work well-being scale to measure the managers’ occupation well-being. Zheng Nan and Zhou Enyi (2017) developed occupation well-being scale for grass-roots civil servants. The specific research objects and the structural dimensions of measurements were given in the Table 1:

4. Research on the Correlated Variables of Occupation Well-being

The scholars have deeply discussed the antecedent variables and the outcome variables of the occupation well-being. From the content and the quantity of literature, the quantity of antecedent variables is more than the outcome variables on the occupation well-being.

4.1 Prior variables of occupation well-being

It was not an easy matter to identify the factors that contributed to well-being (Diener, 2000). What were the factors related to well-being? The research showed that well-being was the subjective perception of individual, displaying complex and changeable characteristics. Referring to the current literatures of occupation well-being, it was affected by the individual factors and organizational factors.

In the aspect of individual factors, the scholars found that occupation well-being had great relationship with age, work motivation and individual resources through empirical studies. Peter Warr (1992) found that the relationship between the age of employees and the occupation well-being was U-shaped through a survey of 1686 employees. Claudia M. Haase and etc. (2012) pointed out the influence on work well-being of work motivation. Zheng Nan and Zhou Enyi (2017) did the research based on 912 grassroots civil servants in Shaanxi Province, which showed that there was a significant positive correlation between public service motivation and occupation well-being of grassroots civil servants. In addition, other scholars also found that the individual possession of human capital, social capital and psychological capital and other resources also affected the occupation well-being.

The variables of work tasks, job characteristics, working conditions, working hours, work pressure, promotion opportunities and others in the organizational level were also factors affecting the occupation well-being.
In the current research of occupation well-being, the work characteristic was an inseparable concept. Bakker, AB, E. Demerouti and I. Sanz-Vergel (2014) studied the influence mechanism to individual occupation well-being. They found there was a significant negative correlation between work demand and occupation well-being. Bakker et al. pointed out the influence of work characteristic on the occupation well-being and divided all work characteristics into work demand and work resource. When the work demand was increasing, the laborer’s energy loss would also be increased. The health, work satisfaction and work motivation then would be decreased. Therefore, the work demand would have a negative effect on occupation well-being.

The work and occupation pressure were also the influencing factors of occupation well-being. Sadia Malik, Saima Noreen (2015) found the occupation pressure could influence the teachers’ affective well-being with the organizational support as intermediation through the study of the teachers’ group. However, Shen Yi and Zhou Zhen (2016) then chose Chinese employees as the research objectives, stating the influencing mechanism on occupation well-being of Chinese managers’ working pressure. Also, the significant negative effect on occupation well-being of work pressure has also been verified.

As for the relationship of work resource and occupation well-being, Chen Chunhua, Song Yixiao and Cao Zhoutao (2017) built the organizational support resource theoretical model of inner mechanism which influenced employees’ well-being. The empirical analysis then analyzed the positive effect of organizational support resource on employees’ well-being. Zheng Xiaoming and Wang Qianqian (2016) found the positive correlation between ethic leaders and employees’ well-being. The higher level of ethical leadership, the higher well-being of the employees will be.

Fairness was an important factor of occupation well-being. Cassar & Buttigieg (2015) argued that fairness influenced the employees’ well-being in a positive way. In order to further study the relations between fairness and employees’ well-being, Zheng Xiaoming and Liu Xin (2016) used the investigation method of multi-time-point matching questionnaires, discussing one of the forms of organizational justice- the relationship between fair interaction and employees’ well-being. The data showed the positive correlativity between fair interaction and employees’ well-being.

4.2 Research on the posterior influence factors

Comparing with pre-influencing factors, the research results of the posterior influence factors were relatively less. In the current researches, the posterior influence factors of occupation well-being focused on the discussion of work performance. The empirical studies of Pierre X and Tremblay D (2011) have found that occupation well-being could improve the level of individual performance. Wang Gang, etc. (2015) analyzed the influence of work commitment and occupation well-being on work performance. The results showed that the occupation well-being had a little mesomeric function between the work commitment and work performance. Fiona Edgar, etc. (2016) deeply discussed the relationship between the occupation well-being and performance. The data showed that the life satisfaction of occupation well-being had a significant and positive influence on the objective performance. The attention on the occupation well-being had an obvious influence on the subjective performance.

5. Future Research Trends of Occupation Well-being

The research on the occupation well-being started earlier in the foreign countries than in China. The research of occupation well-being in our country by the scholars mainly started from the end of the 20th century. After 20 years’ of efforts, the research of occupation well-being has made great progress. However, there were also some aspects needing further study.

5.1 Constant expansion of occupation well-being’s research objects

The occupation well-being’s research objects of the scholars mainly focused on the schools, including kindergarten teachers, primary school teachers, secondary school teachers, principals and university teachers, librarians, counselors, college students and other groups. There were also a few research studied the occupation well-being of the editors and medical workers groups. In recent
years, the scholars began to pay attention to the occupation well-being of managers, employees, taxi drivers (Panda Lukogo Kitronza & Philoppe Mairiaux, 2015), and civil servants. Therefore, comparing with quantity of occupational categories, the application fields of occupation well-being were still less. The future research would gradually expand the objective groups, such as the research of social workers and volunteers in the field of social work.

5.2 Factors of occupation well-being had to be discussed further

At present, the exploration of the theory and the practice of occupation well-being were both in the initial stage. According to the current literature of occupation well-being we could know that the literature mainly focused on the influential factors’ research of prior variables on occupation well-being. The researches of outcome variables were relatively less. In addition, the current study of occupation well-being mainly centered on the discussion of individual impact, but cared less about the influence from the team, group or organization. Therefore, the scholars in the future could discuss the influence of occupation well-being on multi-level outcome variables.

5.3 Comparative study of occupation well-being among inter-professional employees or occupational group

In order to accurately grasp the occupation well-being of different professional employees to provide referential suggestions with strong aims for the practice of human resource management, it was essential to do comparative study on the occupation well-being for different professional employees. Through the comparative study, analyze the particularity of occupation well-being in each position or occupation group and make clear the resource of each kind of occupation well-being to provide scientific basis for human resource management.

References


