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THE MEDIATING ROLE OF MEANINGFUL WORK IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAREER GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES AND WORK ENGAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

Work engagement has gained much appreciation over the recent decades. Therein, multifold of research can be tracked whereby, scholars are attempting to outline and understand what possibly can predict this element of positive occupational psychology. Notably, employee engagement has been recently termed as the most important prospect that businesses require these days to ensure that the workforce is full of energy, passion, and commitment towards their work. It is essential for the enterprises to understand how to best manage its workforce for strategic sustenance as human resources are the only element that could help to bring competitive advantage to the business at present times. Importantly, organizational scholars have realized that in today`s global economy, what pushes people the most to give their best towards work more than anything else is career growth opportunities. However, there is a dearth of research pertaining to how career growth opportunities can foster work engagement. Therefore, the present study aimed to address a crucial research gap through examining the role of Career Growth Opportunities (CGO) towards enhancing Work Engagement (WE). Accordingly, the study also strived to test the direct as well as mediating effect of Meaningful Work (MW) in this relationship.

METHODOLOGY

To fulfill the objectives of the study, a survey was conducted on employees working in the four major retail banks in Perlis, Kedah, Penang, Perak, and Terengganu from the Malaysian Peninsula working in various positions in the service branches. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to the randomly selected employees. A total of 320 usable questionnaires were received back. Grounded on gender, male constituted 61% while female represented 39% of the sample population. The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in IBM-SPSS-Amos 21.0 and the stated hypotheses were tested.

FINDINGS

The study found the following direct effects are positive and significant namely, Career Growth Opportunities on Work Engagement ($\beta=0.255$, $P=.001$), Career Growth Opportunities on Meaningful Work ($\beta=0.666$, $P=.000$), and Meaningful Work on Work Engagement ($\beta=0.605$, $P=.000$). The study also found Meaningful Work partially mediates the relationship between Career Growth Opportunities and Work Engagement. Overall, the results have landed support for Meaningful Work effects and its association with Career Growth Opportunities through which organizations can help improve employees' Work Engagement.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study has provided empirical confirmation towards the concept of work engagement through outlining how the career growth opportunities can contribute and how the meaningful work can intervene. The study found a positive relationship between career growth opportunities and work engagement whereby, it also found meaningful work partially mediating this relationship.

ORIGINALITY

The findings of this study, provide empirical confirmation towards the concept of work engagement and how career growth opportunities can contribute through meaningful work to it. It proves support to the explanations for the conservation of resources theory and how individual positive behaviors could be shaped. The study has also furthered significant implications for HR practitioners and engagement enthusiasts to help smooth their understanding and knowledge regarding career growth opportunities, work engagement, and meaningful work perceptions. The results have empirically strived to help them boost engagement at work.

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