

Symposium S114

Decent Work and Well-Being in a Changing World of Work: Studies in four countries

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In line with this year's conference theme, "The future is now: The changing world of work," this symposium focuses on studies or approaches that guide practitioners in their interventions to align them with decent work contexts. Ensuring decent work contexts is an essential prerequisite for respecting human rights and, therefore, a relevant contribution to ensuring that changes in the world of work do not adversely affect life at work and beyond.

The symposium focuses on the relationship between decent work and well-being in work contexts in four countries.

First, the results of the Decent Work Questionnaire (DWQ) adaptation and validation processes in those countries are presented. Subsequently, the relationships between the dimensions configuring decent work and those related to well-being, assessed through work engagement and burnout, are presented and discussed. In this context, in its positive (empowering) and negative (toxic) dimensions, leadership is still discussed and related to work motivation.

Papers presented in this symposium will focus on decent work, well-being (engagement and burnout), leadership, and work motivation and represent initiatives from 4 European countries: Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom, and Russia. With the following presentations, we hope to inspire the debate on making organizations better places to work in a changing world of work.

In a post-modern and post-industrial world, Work and Organizational Psychology must attend to new trends and develop new assessment and intervention tools that allow psychologists to play a central role in promoting essential values in a work context. Identifying work factors influencing the well-being of workers, in both its positive and negative facets, is a significant step in this endeavour by allowing for the development of effective organizational intervention programs in this regard. These questions are central in the first paper, reporting results obtained in the United Kingdom.

The second paper describes the psychometric properties of the Russian version of the Decent Work Questionnaire and the relationships of decent work with well-being variables, such as burnout and work engagement.

Similarly, the third paper presents the adaptation and validation of the Spanish version of the Decent Work Questionnaire and the relationships between decent work and work engagement and decent work and burnout.

The fourth paper investigates to what extent toxic and empowering leadership dimensions influence the various work motivation types differently. Furthermore, taking the different dimensions of the two types of leadership, the goal was to create different leadership worker profiles and analyze the way they associate with the several motivation types.

Research/Practical Implications

Each of the papers in this symposium analyzes in detail the uniqueness of its contributions to a better/decent place to work in a changing world of work. At the end of the four presentations, we will present an integrative summary, highlighting the most relevant aspects from the point of view of

research and intervention. Its relevance is all the more remarkable as they emerge from studies carried out concerning the work contexts of four different countries.

Overall conclusions

Decent work is an essential feature of work contexts for promoting well-being, and interventions in organizations must have evidence-based guidelines to become better workplaces in a changing world of work.

Intended audience

Both academics and practitioners

Keywords: Decent Work; Well-Being; Changing World

Paper 1

Decent work: Studies in the United Kingdom

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Research goals and why the work was worth doing: In a post-modern and post-industrial world, the overwhelming focus on economic development and wealth has given place to reaffirming human values such as justice, inclusion, respect for the environment, health, well-being, etc. Work and Organizational Psychology must attend to these trends and develop new assessment and intervention tools that allow psychologists to play a central role in promoting these values in a work context in a changing world of work. Identifying work factors influencing the well-being of workers, in both its positive and negative facets, is a significant step in this endeavour by allowing for the development of effective organizational intervention programs in this regard.

Theoretical background: One of the most promising constructs for promoting quality of life and well-being at work in a changing world of work is that of Decent Work (DW). Developed under the aegis of the International Labour Organization (ILO) as a conceptual framework for the promotion of human rights and social justice at work, DW has the potential to be a highly heuristic concept in guiding the exploration of factors contributing to well-being at work, and the development of interventions that help work and organizational psychologists to pursue fundamental human values. The application of the DW framework in the current study used the Decent Work Questionnaire (DWQ), a multidimensional self-report instrument assessing workers' perceptions of the degree to which their current job fulfills the main aspirations instituted in the ILO framework. Developed in an international context and closely following the framework mentioned earlier, the DWQ has already shown solid psychometric qualities and predictive capabilities in several languages.

Design/Method: This study employed, for the first time, the newly developed English version of the DWQ. The sample was composed of 621 workers from all four countries of the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland), with an overrepresentation of highly qualified workers (e.g., professors, researchers, physicians, lawyers, etc.), due to the larger research project of which this study was a part. The DWQ is a 31-item self-report questionnaire comprising a global DW scale and 7-factor scales corresponding to facets of the ILO framework but established initially based on exploratory factor analyses. Well-being at work was measured in its negative (burnout) and positive (engagement) facets, employing the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale and the Personal Burnout subscale of the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory. First, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to test the psychometric properties of the new English version of the DWQ. Subsequently, the value of DW facets in predicting well-being was explored using zero-order correlations and multiple regression analyses.

Results obtained: The CFA showed good adjustment to the theoretical model established with previous versions of the DWQ, especially after introducing some additional, theoretically sensible paths similar to those considered in other versions. Cronbach alphas were also adequate for the global score and factor scores. Multiple regression analyses identified the Fulfilling and Productive Work factor of the DWQ as the major contributor to Work Engagement and the Adequate Working Time and Workload factor as the best predictor of burnout.

Research/Practical Implications

In addition to demonstrating the psychometric qualities of the English version of the DWQ, opening the door to the development of research with this concept and instrument in the internationally preponderant community of English-speaking countries, this study has again supported the advantage of a multidimensional approach to the assessment of DW, by showing that specific facets of the construct may influence equally specific factors of workers' well-being. Therefore, these findings may help work and organizational psychologists hone their intervention strategies in situations where a particular aspect of well-being seems to be especially lacking.

Originality/Value

In addition to the availability of an English version of the DWQ, the demonstration that similar factors appear to influence different facets of well-being in different countries, together with the availability of instruments in an increasing number of languages, should encourage the development of further cross-cultural studies in this domain.

Limitations

The major limitation of this study is the focus on highly qualified workers, which may doubt the generalizability of the results. Future studies should include other types of workers' populations to establish the validity and usefulness of the DW concepts and the DWQ in other contexts. Examining different outcomes, for example, in health domains or the work-family interface, could also open new avenues for research and interventions.

Intended audience

Both Academics and Practitioners

Keywords: Decent Work; Work Engagement; Personal Burnout

Paper 2

Decent Work Questionnaire: Psychometric properties of the Russian version

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Research goals

The present study describes the psychometric properties of the Russian version of the Decent Work Questionnaire (DWQ) and the relationships of decent work construct with well-being variables such as burnout and work engagement.

Theoretical background and why the work was worth doing

Decent work (DW) is a very comprehensive concept in work-related sciences and concerns people's aspirations for their working lives. DW's idea has been introduced as an aspirational statement about work conditions and context, as decent work conditions continue to be relatively infrequent in many countries and at-risk in developed ones. The DW concept defines a set of universally considered desirable work characteristics; however, it is not easy to measure. Ferraro et al. (2018) developed the Decent Work Questionnaire (DWQ); it measures seven dimensions that assess how employees perceive and evaluate their work content and context. The questionnaire was developed and validated in Portuguese (Ferraro et al., 2018) and Italian (Ferraro et al., 2021). The DWQ must be made available also in other languages, and the present study describes the preliminary results of the Russian version of the instrument. This step is essential for researchers and practitioners to use the DWQ in Russian workplaces and assess how much employees perceive their respective workplaces as decent. Previous studies with DWQ showed a relevant role in promoting work engagement and the prevention of burnout.

Method

A questionnaire in the Russian language was available online, from March 22 to May 10, 2021, on the Qualtrics platform. Information about the questionnaire was spread using social media, and Russian professional organizations were contacted to facilitate recruiting. Respondents had to be employed, have at least six months of professional experience, and get paid for their work. Answered the survey 222 respondents, but only 181 completed the survey in full.

In addition to the Russian version of the DWQ, the survey included the Russian-validated version of work engagement (Scahufeli & Bakker, 2004) and the Oldenburg burnout inventory (Demerouti et al., 2010; Russian version by Smirnova, 2017). When the Russian version was unavailable, scales were translated and back-translated by Russian and English native speakers.

Results

The results of this study are preliminary and still being processed. An Exploratory Factor Analysis shows six dimensions, with an eigenvalue greater than 1, explaining 65,8% of the variance. A confirmatory factor analysis on the seven dimensions proposed by Ferraro et al. (2018), conducted with Mplus, shows acceptable results with indicators that very slightly increase when correlating the errors of two items in the same dimension. Cronbach's alpha of the seven dimension range between .72 (Social protection) and .88 (Meaningful remuneration). A global DW scale was computed,

showing a positive and significant correlation with work engagement ($r = .68$), and a negative correlation with burnout ($r = -.58$).

The study also made it possible to empirically support the positive relationships between decent work and work engagement and the negative relationships between decent work and burnout.

Research/Practical Implications

From a theoretical perspective, this study shows that the DWQ is a valid and reliable instrument even when submitted to Russian workers. From a practical point of view, this study suggests continuing the validation process of the Russian version so that scholars and practitioners can measure employees' perception of the various aspects that constitute the decent work concept to introduce some improvements in work conditions.

Originality/Value/Limitations

This study, conducted on Russian employees, includes validating the Russian version of the Decent work questionnaire. The instrument validation in other languages will offer the basis for work and organizational perspective on decent work. Limitations concern the online data collection: respondents belong to different organizations, the number of respondents is not very high, and employees using social media had more opportunities to answer the questionnaire.

Intended audience

Both Academics and Practitioners

Keywords: Decent work; Burnout; Work Engagement

Paper 3

Decent work and well-being in a Spanish work context

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Research goals and why the work was worth doing

The growing attention to business ethics and integrity and the concern for human rights at work has been an increasingly relevant issue in the changing world of work. Decent work is an essential work-related concept representing the defence and promotion of human rights at work and business and the fulfilling and productive work maintained with social dialogue. This is relevant in any setting and gains relevance in professional environments. The workplaces are fulcrum to physical and mental health, personal and professional development, and organizational and societal innovation and advances. Promoting, ensuring, and protecting human rights means ensuring fundamental individual freedoms in different forms and levels. Having fundamental rights respected at work can be decisive for people to achieve their aspirations and well-being. The current study presents the adaptation and validation of the Spanish version of the Decent Work Questionnaire (DWQ) and the relationships between DW and work engagement and DW and burnout.

Theoretical background

Despite some progress in improving DW, deterioration has been observed in recent years. Precarious work is growing to create new forms of DW deficit. The study of DW has been undertaken to map its presence/absence in different countries and regions. Considering the scarcity of psychological instruments for measuring DW, previous studies developed and validated the Decent Work Questionnaire for Portuguese-speaking countries (Portugal and Brazil; Ferraro et al., 2018) and Italian workers (Ferraro et al., 2021). This instrument is based on International Labour Organization propositions and covers the full range of the decent work construct, measuring workers' perception of their work content and context.

Design/Method

The DWQ Spanish version was applied in a high-skilled workers sample (N = 1528) in Spain. The inclusion criteria adopted for participants in this research were: (a) having at least six months of professional experience; (b) being currently employed; and (c) receiving payment for the work carried out. The research protocol includes a Spanish-validated version of Work engagement (Schaufeli et al., 2002) and Personal burnout, a subscale of the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (Kristensen et al., 2005 Spanish version by Molinero-Ruiz, Quintero, & Moncada-Lluis, 2013). The data were submitted to exploratory factor analysis, followed by cross-validation in confirmatory factor analysis.

Results obtained

The Exploratory Factor Analysis shows seven dimensions accounting for 69% of the total variance. The Confirmatory factor analyses confirmed both the original high-order model with 7-factors of the DWQ, a very good model fit, and good internal consistency reliability ($\alpha = .94$). Convergent and discriminant validity, tested using Work Engagement, and Personal Burnout scales were supported

by the data. Therefore, the DWQ Spanish version yielded a reliable and valid multidimensional measurement tool and strengthened it as a good cross-cultural measure of DW.

Research/Practical Implications

For future research, the evolution of the DW concept from a Work, Organizational, and Personnel Psychology (WOPP) perspective may bring new theories to this field. The DW concept and its application have been developed based on the contribution of different disciplines and areas of knowledge at different levels of analysis. Research in the WOPP field has advanced and shown that this is a relevant and up-to-date concept. Efforts for its practice in professional environments can be a pertinent factor for the health and well-being of people and organizations. At the same time, researching and promoting the application of DW in work settings and relationships at work is a way to rescue WOPP' humanist tradition (Grandey et al., 2015; Lefkowitz, 2008). The inclusion of a DW Agenda as a humanistic agenda for WOPP professionals represents, simultaneously, the valorization of human beings in their work and seeks to meet broader societal concerns. Applying a DW approach in conceiving strategic HR interventions can promote innovative work/job (re)design and improve workplace well-being.

Originality/Value

More than 480 million people worldwide have Spanish as their first language. The DWQ' Spanish version will be a helpful tool to explore aspects that influence DW for workers who speak this language. This psychometric instrument could bring a better understanding of DW to different cultures and businesses worldwide. The application of DWQ could open new avenues for theoretical and empirical development of the concept and practical HR interventions.

Limitations

Future research needs to continue to test the structure of these seven dimensions in other cultures. Future studies are relevant for enlarging the DW nomological network and deepening understanding of how the seven dimensions interact. These steps will enrich our knowledge of the social issues surrounding DW and add to DWQ's usefulness.

Intended audience

Both Academics and Practitioners

Keywords: Decent Work Spanish Version; Burnout; Work Engagement