

Exploring the Relationships between Job Satisfaction, Work Engagement, and Loyalty of Academic Staff

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Abstract : This paper aims to link together the concepts of job satisfaction, work engagement, trust, job meaningfulness and loyalty to the organisation focusing on specific type of employment-academic jobs. The research investigates the relationships between job satisfaction, work engagement and loyalty as well as the impact of trust and job meaningfulness on the work engagement and loyalty. The survey was conducted in one of the largest Latvian higher education institutions and the sample was drawn from academic staff (n=326). Structured questionnaire with 44 reflective type questions was developed to measure toe constructs. Data was analysed using SPSS and Smart-PLS software. Variance based structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) technique was used to test the model and to predict the most important factors relevant to employee engagement and loyalty. The first order model included two endogenous constructs (loyalty and intention to stay and recommend, and employee engagement), as well as six exogenous constructs (feeling of fair treatment and trust in management; career growth opportunities; compensation, pay and benefits; management; colleagues; teamwork; and finally job meaningfulness). Job satisfaction was developed as second order construct and both: first and second order models were designed for data analysis. It was found that academics are more engaged than satisfied with their work and main reason for that was found to be job meaningfulness, which is significant predictor for work engagement, but not for job satisfaction. Compensation is not significantly related to work engagement, but only to job satisfaction. Trust was not significantly related neither to engagement, nor to satisfaction, however, it appeared to be significant predictor of loyalty and intentions to stay with the University. This paper revealed academic jobs as specific kind of employment where employees can be more engaged than satisfied and highlighted the specific role of job meaningfulness in the University settings.

Keywords : job satisfaction, job meaningfulness, higher education, work engagement

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