



A Study on the Relationship between Job Characteristic Factors and Job Performance - Focusing on the Mediating Role of Empowerment

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Abstract

Purpose: This study verified the influence of teachers' job characteristics on empowerment and job performance, and the mediating effect of empowerment in the relationship between job characteristics factors and job performance. **Research design, data, and methodology:** As a factor influencing human resources that influence organizational success or failure, job characteristics induce an important psychological state in organizational members, which affects individual motivation and job satisfaction, thereby achieving the goal of securing stable management and job security. In this study, a questionnaire survey of private academy instructors was conducted and reliability and factor analysis, and multiple regression analysis were used. **Results:** The purpose of this study was to understand the effect of the job characteristics of academy instructors on empowerment and job performance, and to verify whether empowerment plays a mediating role in the relationship between job characteristics and job performance. **Conclusions:** As a result of verifying Hypothesis 1, the educational environment, expertise, and social support of academy instructors all had a significant positive (+) effect on job performance. As a result of the verification of Hypothesis 2, empowerment greatly mediated the relationship between the educational environment, expertise, and job performance. However, empowerment did not mediate the relationship between social support for academy instructors and job performance.

Keywords: Job Characteristics, Empowerment, Education Service, Job Performance, Social Support

JEL Classification Code: M10, M12, M14.

1. Introduction

Education is considered an indicator of national development from a national perspective and school education is considered very important. However, recent rapid social changes caused by industrialization, informatization, and internationalization have revealed the limitations of school education in that what is learned in school education cannot be applied to life, and second and third educational opportunities are needed to acquire knowledge and information. To compensate for the limitations of school education arising from this problematic situation, academy education is currently playing an important role in education beyond the scope of school.

Academies are used to overcome the limitations of school education and meet social demands in this educational reality.

An academy is an educational institution used to extend and supplement school education to meet the various learning needs of as many students as possible and to provide abundant learning opportunities. Academies in Korea today are so diverse that their type or number cannot be easily defined.

Most students participate in simple supplementary learning conducted by private institutes due to dissatisfaction with school life or learning, and participate in supplementary learning to receive education on an individual level, away from the uniform teaching method that does not consider differences in individual abilities.

This is because the academy instructor plays an important

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role in the growth and development of students by constantly interacting with students and parents as well as classes. Moreover, because the instructors of an academy are expected to play a greater role in character development as well as the learning guidance of students, the competence and beliefs of the instructors should be treated with interest (Kang, 2009).

The role and educational influence of academy satisfaction of instructors has become important. In addition, a study on the job satisfaction of instructors in academies is necessary to manage academies.

Therefore, this study examines the influence of the instructor's job characteristics factors on empowerment and job performance, and examines the role of empowerment between job characteristics and job performance. (Wallach & Mueller, 2008)

The ultimate purpose of this study is to identify job characteristics that influence the job performance of instructors at an academy. In addition, the importance of empowerment in the relationship between job characteristics and job performance of academy instructors is examined.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Academy Instructor's Job Environment

Satisfaction related to the job of instructors in an academy is linked to the quality of education, so it has a more important meaning than any social organization. The academy instructor exerts a strong influence on sensitive adolescent students. Therefore, it is necessary to increase the job satisfaction level of instructors so that it has a good effect on not only improving students' grades, but also on the formation of personalities and values.

Borman and Dowling (2017) argued that the most important factors that academy instructors consider when working in an academy are wages, smooth relationships between colleagues, the institution's facility environment, convenience of transportation, welfare facilities, and potential for promotion. They argued that academies need support for the re-education of the instructors, building a welfare system and building trust.

Ostroff (1992) said that the relationship between the academy manager and instructors is important, because the better the relationship, the higher the job satisfaction with the academy and the higher the efficiency.

2.2. Job Characteristics Theory

Hackman and Oldham (1976) found that certain job

characteristics influence overall job factors (job satisfaction, intrinsic job motivation, job quality, etc.). Therefore, the job characteristics theory defines the core job characteristics for effective job design. The five dimensions of core job characteristics are skill diversity, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback.

The job characteristic theory is one of the representative theories to explain the effect of jobs on an organization or its members. The key point of the job characteristics model proposed in the prior study (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) is that the positive performance of an individual's job is based on three main psychological states: the meaning of the job, the sense of responsibility for the job, and the knowledge of job performance results. It occurs with experience, and this psychological state is triggered by the five dimensions of job characteristics.

The process from job characteristics to performance is as follows. First, the core job dimensions influence the employee's main psychological state. Among the five core job dimensions, skill diversity, task identity, and job importance affect the meaning or value employees feel about their job. Autonomy, one of the core jobs dimensions, increases the sense of responsibility for the job. Finally, feedback, a key job dimension, increases the employee's own knowledge of job performance results.

Self-determining job motivation is a complex concept in which four types of motivation are combined. Since these various motivation types are combined, companies' responses to improving self-determining job motivation can also be expanded in various ways (Kang, Hur, & Kim, 2018).

2.2.1. Skill variety

This refers to the degree to which employees are required to perform activities that use a variety of skills and abilities to carry out their duties.

First, if the job itself can develop employees' skills and abilities in various ways, employees perceive their job or task as meaningful. Also, the more the job itself uses a higher level of skill or has more challenging tasks, the more valuable employees feel their job is.

Functional diversity requires various knowledge and skills in work performance, so the development of a variety of skills is needed (Kim & Yong, 2018.)

2.2.2. Task identity

This refers to the integrity of the job, that is, the degree of completion required by the job. In other words, it refers to the extent to which the job occupies the entire task from start to finish.

The work characteristics that guarantee autonomy are able to recognize the possibility that members could bring about voluntary and innovative behavior, and confirmed this possibility (Ryu & Lee, 2016).

2.2.3. Task significance

This means the perception that the job itself plays an important role in the life or welfare of colleagues, organizations, or customers. Job outcomes affect happiness, health, and safety.

It means that employees become more and more immersed in their team when they are interested in them by setting an example, providing information, and participating in decision making (Ryu & Lee, 2016).

2.2.4. Autonomy

This refers to the degree of autonomy, independence, and discretion allowed for workers when employees plan schedules for their jobs or determine procedures for performing their jobs.

Work autonomy should be guaranteed. If job autonomy, which is a sub-variable of job allocation, is guaranteed, it will be very helpful to improve self-determination as a sub-variable of empowerment (Kim & Yong, 2018).

2.2.5. Feedback

Feedback refers to the amount of direct and reliable information employees get about the effectiveness or quality of their job performance. Feedback in the job characteristics theory means that information about a result is obtained from the job behavior itself.

Leaders must help in recognizing the significance of tasks and establishing task identity and build a task structure for offering aggressive feedback on tasks (Park & Choi, 2015).

3. Research Hypothesis

3.1. Relationship between Job Characteristics and Job Performance

Job performance refers to the results of the efforts practitioners make to achieve an organization's goals or tasks. Job performance is a concept representing the actions of practitioners in performing the role of an organization.

Fried and Ferris (1986) argued that to improve performance, the level of job identity and feedback should be improved, and to improve job commitment and organizational commitment, functional diversity, task importance, autonomy, and level of feedback should be improved.

The results of a study on police officers conducted by Lim & Park (2010), empirically confirmed that the functional diversity of job characteristics, job importance, and feedback had a positive (+) effect on job satisfaction.

Therefore, the following hypothesis was established.

H1: The job characteristic of academy instructors will affect job performance

H1-1: The educational environment of an academy will have a positive (+) significant effect on job performance.

H1-2: The professionalism of academy instructors will have a positive (+) significant effect on job performance.

H1-3: The social support of the academy for instructors will have a positive (+) significant effect on job performance.

3.2. Relationship among Job Characteristics, Empowerment, and Job Performance

Job characteristics not only affect job loyalty and participation behavior, but also greatly affect empowerment by giving organization members autonomy and encouraging them to have self-efficacy (Park & Hong, 2011).

Block (1987) emphasized that empowerment can increase when organizational members perform appropriate tasks, and suggested that role factors can be an important variable in the empowerment of organizational members (Zahed & Adel. etc., 2019). The higher the job autonomy, the higher the level of empowerment, which has a positive effect on job satisfaction.

Abdullah, Mohd, and Asma (2012) stated that the job characteristics of SME workers have a significant influence on empowerment, which means that empowerment is formed when appropriate tasks are given to the workers.

People who perceive high levels of empowerment tend to take action that is beneficial to the organization because they are aware of self-efficacy or autonomy (Kirkman & Rosen, 1999). This showed that employees' perception of empowerment had a positive effect on job performance.

Spreitzer, Kizilos, and Nason (1997) confirmed that the capacity of empowerment influenced performance evaluation. They said that the members of the organization who perceive empowerment have the power and ability to do many important things for the organization on their own, so they perform their work at a high level.

Therefore, the following hypothesis was established.

H2: Empowerment will mediate the relationship between the job characteristics of academy instructors and job performance of instructors in an academy.

H2-1: Empowerment will mediate the relationship between the educational environment of the academy and job performance.

H2-2: Empowerment will mediate the relationship between the professionalism of academy instructors and job performance.

H2-3: Empowerment will mediate the relationship between the social support of the academy for instructors and job performance.

4. Research Method and Hypotheses Verification

To achieve the purpose of this study, literature research and empirical research were conducted in parallel. The specific method is as follows.

First, to analyze the relationship between the job characteristics, empowerment, and job performance of academy instructors, existing domestic and foreign papers were referred to and a theoretical system was established as a research framework.

Second, a research model and research hypothesis were established based on the theoretical background, and a survey method was used to measure the contents of each factor. A questionnaire was made consisting of general information on the survey subjects, job characteristics and empowerment of academy instructors, and job performance factors. The data were collected using individual interviews and self-written survey methods, respectively, and the survey subjects were directly displayed after hearing an explanation on each question from a surveyor who received the research purpose and survey contents from the researcher.

Third, the subjects of the survey for empirical investigation analysis were for academy instructors currently working in domestic academies.

Statistical processing for empirical analysis was conducted using SPSS for Win 18.0.

4.1. Collecting Data

For this study, 100 instructors at academies were asked to fill out a questionnaire, and analysis was conducted on 73 people who answered honestly.

4.2. Measurement Questions

4.2.1. The educational environment of academy

Based on Uline & Moran (2008), five questions were made. "I am generally satisfied with the facilities of our institute," "The educational environment facilities of our institute are clean and comfortable," "I am generally satisfied with the facilities of our institute," etc.

4.2.2. Professionalism of academy instructors

Eight questions were created based on Lee & Kim (2014), and the contents of the questionnaire are as follows. "I try to be equipped with the necessary knowledge for instruction," "I try to learn more about the subject," etc.

4.2.3. Social support for instructors by academy

The concept of "social support for instructors by academy" is the help with various forms and functions that an individual can obtain from interpersonal relationships. Four questions were created based on a prior study (Dunst,

Trivette, & Deal, 1988), and the contents of the questionnaire are as follows. "The head of the academy and fellow teachers are interested in the work process and help me," "The head of the academy and fellow teachers fully understand my work," etc.

4.2.4. Empowerment

Based on a thesis (Spreitzer, 1995), six questions including the following were created. "Showing my academic knowledge or ability is helpful for the academy," "My opinion is actively reflected in the work of the academy," "I am doing an important job in the academy," etc.

4.2.5. Job performance

Based on a thesis (Parry, 1996), six questions including the following were created. "The students I teach have a high degree of understanding of the class," "The students I teach have a high degree of satisfaction in class," "With my guidance, students who have problems with their lifestyle have significantly improved," etc.

4.3. Reliability and Validity Verification

4.3.1. Reliability verification

To evaluate reliability, Cronbach's α coefficient was used, and since all variables showed a level of 0.8 or higher, reliability was secured. The value of Cronbach's α coefficient of each variable is as follows (the educational environment of the academy = .929, professionalism of academy instructors = .959, social support for instructors by academy = .941, empowerment = .952, job performance = .874).

4.3.2. Validity verification

In this study, factor analysis was conducted to evaluate the validity of the constituent concept among the validity evaluation methods. The factor extraction method used principal component analysis, and the factor rotation method used the varimax method.

To verify the suitability of the factor analysis, the factor loading values of the items used were all 0.5 or more, KMO and Bartlett's sphericity verification of standard formation appropriateness was performed. In addition, the factors appeared to be classified as expected.

4.4. Reliability and Validity Verification

4.4.1. Hypothesis 1 verification results

The results of multiple regression analysis are shown in <Table 1>. As a result of regression analysis that analyzed the influence of job characteristics on job performance, it was found that social support, the educational environment

of the academy, and the expertise of academy instructors had a significant positive (+) effect on job performance.

The social support for academy instructors showed the highest impact at 0.491, and the professionalism of the academy instructor was 0.235 and the educational environment of the academy was 0.203. Therefore, Hypothesis 1-1, Hypothesis 1-2, and Hypothesis 1-3 were all adopted.

Table 1: Multiple regression analysis results (***) $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$)

Independent variable	S.E.	β	t-value	p-value
A constant	.203		4.164	.000
Educational environment of academy	.074	.203	2.122	.037**
Professionalism of academy instructors	.090	.235	2.083	.041**
Social support for instructors by academy	.089	.491	4.518	.000***

4.4.2. Hypothesis 2 verification results

The results of analysis of the mediating effect of empowerment are shown in <Table 2>.

As a result of verification, it was found that the educational environment of the academy and the professionalism of the instructor among the factors of job characteristics of the instructors influenced job performance through empowerment.

However, empowerment did not mediate the relationship between social support for instructors by the academy and job performance. Thus, Hypotheses 2-1 and 2-2 were adopted, but Hypothesis 2-3 was rejected.

Table2: Analysis results of mediating effect of empowerment (***) $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$)

mediating variable	independent variable	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect
Empowerment	The educational environment of the academy	0.203**	0.297 * 0.731= 0.217***	0.203 + 0.217 = 0.420** *
	The professionalism of academy instructors	0.235**	0.454 * 0.731= 0.332***	0.235 + 0.332 = 0.567** *
	Social support for instructors by academy	0.491** *	0.141 * 0.731= 0.103	0.491 + 0.103 = 0.594

This study answers an important research question on the relationship between job characteristics and job performance of academy instructors.

The effect of job characteristics on job performance, the mediating effect of the educational environment, the professionalism of instructors, and social support were verified between job characteristic factors and job performance. According to the factors affecting the work performance of academy instructors, job characteristics in terms of the educational environment of the academy, the professionalism of the instructor, and the social support of the instructor were set as independent variables and empirical analysis was conducted.

The research method applied hypotheses established according to problem raising, and as for spatial scope, a survey of instructors at private academies in Mokpo-si and Muan-gun, Jeollanam-do was conducted, and the hypotheses were verified using SPSS for Win 18.0.

The results of verifying the hypotheses are as follows.

The ultimate purpose of this study is to cultivate excellent private institute instructors by grasping the job characteristics of private institute instructors and improve job-related performance, and to improve the quality of private institute education.

In conclusion, it was found that the educational environment of the institute, the expertise of the institute instructors, and the social support for the institute instructors all significantly and positively influence job performance.

As a result of the verification of hypothesis 2, the educational environment of the institute and the expertise of the institute instructor influenced job performance through empowerment. However, social support for instructors at academy did not affect job performance through empowerment.

The following implications can be drawn from the results.

Organization managers should make efforts to identify specific job characteristics that affect the overall job satisfaction of workers in the organization, and develop specific implementation principles for job redesign using these key job characteristics.

In addition, to improve the job performance of academy instructors, academy operators should devote themselves to the educational environment of the academy and social support for instructors. When devising a plan to improve the educational environment and the professionalism of instructors, it is necessary to consider whether these factors can increase the empowerment of instructors.

Future research directions are as follows.

First, since the academy manager's leadership and management philosophy may be important in organizational operation, research on factors that can affect the improvement of the internal education environment will also

5. Conclusion

be meaningful.

Second, it is necessary to establish various factors for job characteristics in the future, and to study the relationship among these factors, empowerment, and job performance.

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