

Relationships at Work: A Predictor of Psychological Health

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study is to find out the impact of relationships at work on the psychological health of life insurance employees. This empirical study includes 374 employees working in various companies of the life insurance sector of Jalandhar city situated in the northern of India (Punjab). Census method was applied for the data collection. Structured interview schedules containing items of relationships at work and psychological health were used. Analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 16.0 version). To test the impact of poor relationships at work ('unhealthy relationships with supervisor', 'ineffective leadership style' and 'difference in perceptions among staff') on the sub factors of psychological ill-health i.e. 'lack of confidence and concentration', 'lack of positivity' and 'disturbed mind', multiple regression analysis was performed with a statistical significance level set at $p \leq .05$. Results indicated that relationships at work affected the psychological health of insurance employees. The study also identified the percentages of explained variances which were: 21% for 'lack of positivity', 19% for 'lack of confidence & concentration' and 17% for 'disturbed mind'. The analysis would provide a step towards the new perspective on understanding the problem of psychological ill health due to unhealthy relationship at work in the life insurance sector. The findings and implications for organization and health practitioners are discussed.

Keywords: Relationships at Work, Psychological Health, Life Insurance Employees

1. Introduction

Healthy interpersonal relationships of employees at work are essential for the betterment of the individual employees and for the overall organizational health. At the workplace, employees have relationships with superiors, subordinates and colleagues. If these relationships do not offer support to the employees, they get exposed to organizational stress (Cohen & Willis 1985), which turns into ill-health of employees. Cropanzano & Li (2006) found how perceived and damaging politics in organizations destroyed interpersonal relationships at work, thus leading the employees to have stress responses. Davidson & Cooper (1981) found correlation between low interpersonal support at work and stress. A survey conducted by the Ministry of Labour in Japan revealed that due to unsatisfactory interpersonal relations at work, 52% of the women interviewed had experienced anxiety and stress. Further, Branthwaite & Ross (1988) discovered that low interpersonal support at work led the employees to fall a prey to anxiety, emotional exhaustion, job tension and low job satisfaction.

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