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Antecedent and Consequences of Flow: Lessons For Developing Human Resources

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Abstract

Not much is known about flow, a positive psychology experience in non Western countries particularly in human resource development field. Although flow is a universal experience, flow can be expected to be culture specific and culture dependent. There are reasons to believe that emotions at work, and how people express their positive emotions reflects and originated from their cultural characteristics (i.e. Asian are not encouraged to show their negative emotions). The objective of this paper is to examine the antecedents and consequences of flow from literature review. The literature review was conducted within the accessibility limits provided to Universiti Malaysia Sarawak and INTI International University by online databases in Emerald, Sage, JSTOR, ScienceDirect, Elsevier, and EBSCOhost. Twenty one (21) journal articles published between 2000-2012 were reviewed. Fifteen (15) of the articles were studies carried out in Western countries while five (6) of the articles were studies in non-Western countries. The analysis showed that most of the studies were in quantitative method. It was found that antecedents of flow include job characteristics (combination of challenges and resources), work environment and negative organizational outcomes. On the other hand, consequences of flow include intrinsic motivation, engagement and positive mood which lead to higher performance. From this limited literature, no clear distinction between antecedents and consequences of flow between Western and non-Western can be found. Human resource practitioners could design work and environment that can cultivate flow experience in order to increase employees' performance.

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