Developing and testing a model of psychosocial work environment and performance

Good psychosocial work environment has been assumed to result in good work performance. However, little documentation exists which support the claim and the same goes for the opposite claim. This paper reports findings from a combined quantitative and qualitative study of the relationship between psychosocial work environment and performance in a large Danish firm. The objects of the study were more than 45 customer centers’ with 9-20 employees each. A substantial database covering the 45 customer centers over a period of 5 years has been gathered. In this period the Copenhagen psychosocial questionnaire (COPSOQ) has been used two times with two years in between. This allows us to build a model of the relationship between psychosocial work environment, selected context variables and performance data. The model proposes that good psychosocial work environment is a function of leadership which in turn influences individual workers understanding of their job function. These two mechanisms are reinforcing each other and lead to better performance, lower employee turnover and sick days compared to the other customer centers. The model is then tested statistically and verified.

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