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Function of social support in occupational health

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Abstract

Social support is an important type of job resources in the Job Demand-Resources (JD-R) model. We conducted three studies to investigate the function of social support in occupational health. Our first study examines the role of social support in facilitating work engagement and reducing job burnout in a three-wave longitudinal design using Structural Equation Modeling among 160 civil servants in China. The results showed that the pathway from social support to job burnout and engagement was robust and direct, The second study focuses on the role of social support as an antecedent/ mediating variable to influence work-family conflicts among a nationwide sample of 11,419 Chinese science and technology professionals. The results revealed that the relationship between work-family conflict and social support was domain-specific. The independence model fit the data best in the work domain, whereas the mediation model was the best fit for the data in the family domain. The third study explores the moderating role of social support in the relation of proactive personality with organizational citizenship behavior among158 employees in Chinese state-owned companies. The results revealed that for those who possess low social support, proactive personality was negatively associated with organizational citizenship behavior among the Chinese, which appeared to be a culture-related result. In sum, the results of the three studies demonstrate the vital role of social support in a work setting, especially for the Chinese.

Biography

Yiqun Gan is a professor at the Department of Psychology, Peking University, China. She has received her Ph.D. in the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1998. She has published over 70 research papers, among which 18 were on internationally referred journals as the first or corresponding author. She has been in charge of a number of research projects, including projects funded by Natural Science Foundation of China. She serves on the executive editorial board of "Chinese Journal of Mental Health" and is a reviewer for 17 international journals. Her research area focuses on coping, mental health, and job burnout.