



Identification and Explanation of Significant Implications of Job Enlargement as Perceived by Employees and Elites of a Governmental Organization Using Follow-up Explanation Model

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Job Enlargement, follow-up explanation model, Health Care Workers.

ABSTRACT:

Purpose: The present research was performed with the aim of identification and explanation of significant implications of job enlargement as perceived by employees and elites of the health care system.

Design/ methodology/ approach: Using a follow-up explanation model, this research was conducted on employees and elites of the governmental health care system. In the quantitative phase of the work (phase I), the statistical sample was made up of 206 individuals who were included based on a census approach. In the qualitative studies (phase II), a total of 30 elites across the organization were selected through purposive sampling until theoretical saturation was reached. In the quantitative and qualitative Phases of the study, the required data was acquired through a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, respectively. The quantitative data was analyzed by means of descriptive statistics in the SPSS and Amos software packages. Reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed by calculating the Cronbach's alpha (> 0.75). Face validity was evaluated based on the elites' opinions, while the construct validity was assessed as appropriate through the confirmatory factor analysis. In the qualitative phase, Brown and Clark thematic analysis method and Maxqda2018 software were used.

Research Findings: Based on the results of the quantitative analyses, it was figured out that the job enlargement exhibits a significantly positive association with individual efficiency, individual motivation, interesting and fulfilling characters of the job, job satisfaction, organizational efficiency, and compliance of employees' competences with their interests. In the qualitative analyses, we obtained a total of 40 codes, 15 sub- themes, and 3 main themes of advantages, requirements, and disadvantages of job enlargement. Results of the qualitative studies confirmed the positive effect of the job enlargement on the 6 components extracted upon the quantitative analyses (the extracted themes, however, did not confirm the association



of the job enlargement and the compliance of employees' competences with their interests). The themes of job enlargement requirements and disadvantages expanded the results of the quantitative studies.

Limitations & Consequences: The study was performed on the employees of the health care system. This limits the generalizability of the results of the quantitative analyses.

Practical Consequences: Results of this research can help managers better utilize the job enlargement as a technique.

Innovation or value of the Article: This study was conducted using the follow-up expansion model. This model helps enrich the findings.

Paper Type: Research Article

Introduction

To design a job, attempts are made to match applicants to the job [1]. Job enlargement, job enrichment, job rotation, and job simplification are techniques to design a job. [2] Job enlargement is a method to restructure the job, which is used to increase the flexibility of the workforce and reduce the monotony of jobs. In job enlargement, the scope of tasks and responsibilities expands horizontally. The proponents of job enlargement claim that this technique can increase satisfaction, motivation, and quality of work (Maxwell, 2008). Some researchers believe that job enlargement can be effective in increasing employees' efficiency, reducing monotony and boredom in daily work, increasing employees' motivation while doing a new task, and creating a higher level of social interaction and motivation [3]. Some believe that job enlargement has no significant effect on job satisfaction and motivation. [4] Sometimes, this technique may not be used properly. For example, the workload of employees increases without predicting bonuses, leading to reduced job motivation and efficiency in employees [5]. Some other researchers argue that job enlargement has been designed to meet the lower needs of Maslow's pyramid [6] and ignore the higher needs. However, monotonous jobs may cause dissatisfaction in employees and weaken organizational performance. [7] In general, it can be said that job enlargement can cause either job satisfaction or job dissatisfaction depending on how employees expand their jobs and perform their additional tasks and duties. [3] However, job enlargement is an important management tool, and thus conducting research in this regard is valuable.

Therefore, the present study was designed and implemented in Islamabad Gharb's health and treatment system. After Kermanshah's health system, it is the largest health system in Kermanshah Province. The main reasons to conduct this study were as follows: 1. Job enlargement is widely used in organizations but has been neglected in domestic studies. 2. The results of this study can increase the existing knowledge about this issue and help managers to more effectively use job enlargement. 3. Previous studies have focused more on the existing conditions and have provided no suggestion for the optimal use of this technique. 4. Most domestic studies have been quantitative. In this study, the mixed method (explanatory design: follow-up explanation model) was used and thus it can be said that the results are deep and rich enough. This research sought to answer these questions: what are the important outcomes of job enlargement from the perspective of employees and health experts in Islamabad Gharb's health and treatment system and how are they explained?

Method

The present study was applied in terms of purpose, and based on survey strategy. It was a case study and cross-sectional in terms of time horizon (2021-2023). The approach used in this study was comparative-inductive. The strategy used in this study was Creswell and Clark's mixed method (explanatory design: follow-up explanation model. [8] This strategy started with the quantitative method and, after the analysis of data in the quantitative phase, the qualitative method started. The results were integrated and interpreted using the narrative method.



The research quantitative phase (1st phase):

The population consisted of all health experts with different health and treatment fields in the health system (with a minimum degree of associate's and more than one year of work experience). Census was used in this phase (Population=Sample=206 people). The data were collected using the Hawa questionnaire. In the original study, the reliability of the questionnaire was obtained higher than 0.75 using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Ahmed, 2018). In this study, the reliability of the questionnaire was higher than 0.75 using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The questionnaire has 8 items. The experts' opinions were used to determine the content and formal validity of the questionnaire, and one item (item 7) was removed, and the questionnaire was used in the form of a 7-item questionnaire. The structural validity was also evaluated using the optimal confirmatory factor analysis method. The data of the quantitative phase were analyzed using SPSS and Amos. The response rate was 100%. The items were scored using a 5-point Likert scale.

The research qualitative phase (2nd phase)

The participants were 30 health experts who participated in the quantitative phase. They were selected using the purposeful sampling method until reaching theoretical saturation. The basis for selecting the participants was having various experiences of job enlargement. The data of the qualitative phase were collected using semi-structured interviews. The self-monitoring, member checking, and immersion methods were used to achieve the credibility of interviews. The technique of 5W1H was used in the interviews that were face-to-face and conducted by the researcher. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis and based on Braun & Clarke's six-step method. MAXQDA2018 was used to analyze the interviews. To calculate the reliability, a third person who was an expert in the content and qualitative method was used as the second coder. Five interviews were randomly selected and provided to the second coder. According to a capability in MAXQDA2018, the agreement percentage and kappa coefficient were evaluated as good (the agreement percentage between two coders was higher than 76% and the kappa coefficient was higher than 0.74).

Findings of the first phase

In this phase, 206 people (84 females and 122 males) participated in the study. 22 people had an associate's degree, 133 people had a bachelor's degree, 31 people had a master's degree, and 20 people had a Ph.D. degree. The participants' mean age was 38.2 years and the average work experience was 12.8 years. The validity of the questionnaire items was evaluated using first-order confirmatory factor analysis. The results showed that the items could well assess the latent variable. The data collected by the questionnaire were analyzed using the descriptive statistics method. The mean, standard deviation, and correlation between variables were extracted. In the model, all standardized factor loads were higher than 0.4 for all items; that is, the items were well-explanatory. Since the CR of items and job enlargement was higher than 1.96, their level of significance was less than the error level of 0.05; thus, it can be said that the validity of measurement constructs of the variables was confirmed at the significance level of 0.05, and the model parameters were significant.

To confirm the factor analysis and documentation of the results, the fitness of the model was evaluated to be at a good level, considering $RMSEA=0.065$, $(\chi^2/df) = 2.483$, $(GFI)=0.863$, $(IFI)=0.951$, $(CFI)=0.951$.

The findings showed that the employees believed that job enlargement that is combined with their capacities and abilities allowed them to be more efficient in the organization (mean=3.55, standard deviation=1.259). It also increased their abilities to perform their tasks and duties at work (mean=3.54, SD=1.192) and motivated them to perform their daily tasks and responsibilities (mean=3.46, SD=1.263). Moreover, it made their job more interesting and thus decreases the sense of boredom at work (mean=3.44, SD=1.255). It matched their competencies and interests (mean=3.44, SD=1.227), and increased their job satisfaction (mean=3.36, SD=1.253) and organizational work efficiency (mean=3.35, SD=1.224). The general result of the quantitative phase was that job enlargement is significantly and positively related to the mentioned variables.

Findings of the second phase:

30 people (6 females and 24 males) participated in this phase. 15 people had a bachelor's degree, 11 had a master's



degree, and 4 had a Ph.D. degree. The participants' mean age was 42.7 years, and their average work experience was 19.7 years. Thematic analysis was performed using Braun and Clarke's six-step method. 40 codes, 15 subthemes, and 3 main themes were obtained. In the most abstract form, three main themes, i.e., positive outcomes, requirements, and negative outcomes, were determined. These themes were categorized as advantages of job enlargement, requirements of job enlargement, and disadvantages of job enlargement.

The advantages of job enlargement refer to positive outcomes achieved as a result of job enlargement for the individual and the organization. This main theme included eight subthemes (increasing learning, increasing efficiency, increasing job satisfaction, increasing flexibility, increasing challenges and overcoming boredom, increasing motivation, increasing effectiveness, and increasing the ability to perform tasks).

Requirements of job enlargement are factors that will improve the advantages of job enlargement if fulfilled. These requirements cover the stages before, during, and after job enlargement. This main theme included five subthemes (the requirement of the manager's support for the receiver of job enlargement, the requirement of the employee-job match, the requirement of constant monitoring and management, creating job enlargement to a win-win situation for the individual and the organization, and providing physical requirements).

Disadvantages of job enlargement are factors that hinder the achievement of job enlargement goals. This main theme included two subthemes (unequal opportunity for employees, and increased work pressure). Work pressure consisted of increased physical and mental workload, increased work engagement during non-working hours, and increased pressure due to lack of time.

Conclusion and suggestions

In the quantitative phase, it was indicated that job enlargement had a positive and significant relationship with the related variables. The results showed that employees believed that they could achieve the following goals through job enlargement. 1. They could use their capacities and abilities and be more efficient in the organization, 2. Their abilities to perform job duties have increased 3. They are

motivated to perform daily tasks and responsibilities, 4. Their job seems more interesting and they do not feel bored, 5. Their competencies matched their interests, 6. They are more satisfied with their job, and 7. Their work efficiency has increased. In the qualitative phase, thematic analysis of interviews led to 40 codes, 15 subthemes, and 3 main themes. The results showed that the employees' job enlargement should be considered in three dimensions: advantages of job enlargement, requirements of job enlargement, and disadvantages of job enlargement. The main theme of advantages of job enlargement included 8 subthemes (increasing learning, increasing efficiency, increasing job satisfaction, increasing flexibility, increasing challenges and overcoming boredom, increasing motivation, increasing effectiveness, and increasing the ability to perform tasks). The main theme of the requirements of job enlargement had 5 subthemes (the requirement of the manager's support for the receiver of job enlargement, the requirement of the employee-job match, the requirement of constant monitoring and management, creating job enlargement to a win-win situation for the individual and the organization, and providing physical requirements). The main theme of disadvantages of job enlargement included 2 subthemes (unequal opportunity for employees, and increased work pressure). The theme of advantages of job enlargement confirmed six variables (out of 7) of the quantitative phase; however, there was not enough evidence to confirm the variable of the effect of "job enlargement on the match between the employees' competencies and interests". The results of the qualitative phase did not confirm this variable. This can be due to the fact that, considering economic pressure, some employees have to agree with performing additional tasks that are not in their interests to gain more financial benefits. The theme of the advantages of job enlargement expanded the results of the quantitative phase into three subthemes of increasing learning, increasing flexibility, and increasing efficiency. The themes of the requirements of job enlargement and the disadvantages of job enlargement expanded the results of the quantitative phase. The results of the present study were in line with the results found by (Saleem et al., 2012), (Binti Ali, 2016), (Gichuki & Munjuri, 2018), (Adagbabiri & Okolie, 2019), (Iberahim et al., 2020), (Kurniawati & Damayanti, 2020), (Tumi et al., 2022), (Aminu & Sulaiman, 2022), (Ponggohong et al., 2022), (Ebikebina Tantua, 2022), and



(NurAlizad & Bapiri, 2015). The results were inconsistent with the results of (Raza & Nawaz, 2011). It is suggested to use the requirements of job enlargement in the form of a checklist and preferably in the form of software to analyze and develop jobs to create a win-win situation for the individual and the organization. It is suggested to use the advantages of job enlargement as management tools to align individual and organizational goals. It is also suggested to pay more attention to the employees' financial problems to prevent any desire for job enlargement merely to gain financial benefits. In this study, increased work pressure and unequal opportunity for the employees were classified under the theme of disadvantages of job enlargement; it is suggested to implement periodical control to reduce the work pressure with the aim of adjusting or terminating job enlargement. Regarding equal opportunity for employees, it is suggested to provide a balance between the employees' contributions and outputs with organizational justice, the bias between the main and developmental tasks should be reduced or eliminated through training and feedback, the workload should be corrected through job restructuring or structural flexibility, and favoritism should be controlled by clarifying the job path, meritocracy, and preventing the interference of people outside the organization. It is suggested to researchers to 1. Conduct similar studies in different places and times, and 2. Investigate the outcomes of job enlargement techniques in a combined form with job enrichment and job rotation.

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