The Impact of Pride and Passion on Job Engagement with Sport Employees

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The purpose of this study is to provide insight into how pride and passion contribute to sport employee job engagement. Being engaged in one’s job is to be psychologically and emotionally present when occupying and performing an organizational role (Kahn, 1990). There are multiple organizational factors that are influenced by job engagement as it predicts organizational success, financial performance, employee commitment, and employee effort and involvement in the organization (Saks, 2006). Passion in the workplace is viewed as the emotional affect employees have towards their job activities, the values they place on their role in the organization, and the time and energy they invest to complete organizational tasks (Vallerand & Houlifort, 2003). Pride has been described as feeling pleased about a recognized achievement, whereby an employee consequently decides to pursue further relevant action (Williams & DeSteno, 2008).

Scholars note that pride and passion impact a wide range of positive employee behaviors (Todd & Harris, 2009; Trépanier, Fernet, Austin, Forest, & Vallerand, 2014). With the close relationship between sport and emotions, it is reasonable to theorize that emotions could also be an important element within the context of the sport workplace (Swanson & Kent, 2017). Therefore, it is possible that sport employee job engagement may also be impacted by the pride and passion they feel for their position and sport organization. The current study hypothesizes that pride and passion will significantly predict the job engagement of sport employees. This is because both pride and passion promote a feeling of involvement which then influences higher job engagement (Saks, 2006; Todd & Harris, 2009; Trépanier et al., 2014).

The current study uses measures of pride, passion, and engagement which have been demonstrated to be valid and reliable. Each scale in the study used a seven-point Likert-type scale. Pride was measured by Todd and Harris’ (2009) scale, to assess passion we used Trépanier and colleagues’ (2014) measure, and job engagement was measured with Saks’ (2006) scale. In the current work-in-progress study, the researchers will be conducting multiple linear regression and ANOVA analyses to discover how pride and passion affects the job engagement of sport employees. Additionally, this study will assess the prevalence of sport employee pride and passion for their sport organization.

The benefits of this study include providing a better understanding of constructs that are seldom used in the sport management literature (e.g., pride and passion; for an exception see Swanson & Kent, 2017) despite their positive influences on employee behaviors. With an improved understanding of the emotional states of sport employees, enhancements can then be made with regard to their personal development and organizational functionality. Further, developing sport employee engagement is similarly beneficial for employees and their organizations due to increased productivity (Kahn, 1992). The findings from this study will also assist practitioners in determining whether or not pride and passion should be developed amongst employees in order to produce greater job engagement.