Spillover Effects of Sport Participation Programs on Employees’ Psychological and Behavioral Changes in the Workplace

Moonsup Hyun, Temple University
Jeremy Jordan (Advisor), Temple University

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Drawing on social exchange theory and the notion of behavioral spillover, the author examined whether organizational support for employees’ participation in organized sport with coworkers, namely through organized sport participation programs, could engender psychological and behavioral changes in the workplace. Based on a mixed-method approach using multimethod (qualitative and quantitative) data, the author proposed that organized sport participation programs strengthen employees’ social abilities, promote a cooperative organizational culture, and improve employees’ affective organizational commitment. Additionally, results indicated that opportunities for organized sport participation programs should be fairly distributed to all employees, and the level of competitiveness in sport should be well controlled; employees wanted organized sport participation programs to entail a balance between functioning as a social activity and competitive sport. Findings are expected to motivate practitioners to consider adopting organized sport participation programs to create a better organizational culture. Theoretically, this study informs scholarship regarding the benefits of sport participation for individual, organizational, and social development in various life domains.