

EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS OF JOB CHARACTERISTICS AND CHALLENGES OF JOB ROTATION

Dayanath Dhanraj, Sanjana Brijball Parumasur*

Abstract

This study assesses employees' level of satisfaction with the nature of work and specific job characteristics (task variety, challenge, remuneration, recognition and skills variety) and their perceived challenges of job rotation. Biographical influences on these were also assessed. The study was undertaken in an operations environment of a textile company in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The population includes 77 full time shift employees in the organization and due to the small population size consensus sampling was used. Data was collected using a self-developed, pre-coded, self-administered questionnaire whose reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results reflect some doubt regarding the potential for job rotation to reduce work pressure and stress and, indicate the potential of job rotation to disrupt work flow in the short-term and reduce productivity as a result of a reduction in motivation of those employees that are not rotating. Recommendations presented aim to enhance the implementation of job rotation as a work design such that its potential benefits may be realized.

Keywords: Job Design; Job Rotation; Job Satisfaction, Challenges of Job Rotation, Task Variety, Skills Variety

* Corresponding author, School of Management, Information Technology and Governance, College of Law and Management Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal (Westville Campus), Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa
Tel.: +27 31 260 7176
E-mail: brijballs@ukzn.ac.za

Introduction

In the current ever-changing business environment engulfed with global competition, organizational survival and sustainability will be determined by the extent to which the organization is able to develop core competencies in their employees to address the demands that both internal and external customers present to them. This necessitates that the organization ensures that it nurtures a learning environment where the quest for knowledge becomes the kernel whilst using modern technology to make information available to all levels of employees. The learning organization armed with information and knowledge will be able to move from being reactive to proactive to interactive, thereby encouraging every employee to perform optimally. However, human resource managers in South Africa constantly face concerns over employee productivity and job satisfaction as South Africa has one of the lowest productivity levels in the world (Carrell, Elbert, Hatfield, Grobler, Marx and van der Schyf, 1998). Evidently though, job performance and job satisfaction can be enhanced with an appropriate design of a job, which also affects other human resource aspects, that is, work avoidance, commitment and turnover (Ang & Slaughter, 2001; Ho, Chang, Shih & Liang, 2009) and, a very relevant

job design strategy that may be used to support a learning organization is job rotation.

Job design and its potential to influence learning and job satisfaction

Every organization has its goals and mission and, jobs, constituted of one or more tasks, are created to directly support the organization's purpose and vision (Schermerhorn, Hunt & Osborn, 1991). In order for the job to fulfill the organizational need and to satisfy the personal needs of the employee, the specifications of the content, functions, methods and relationships of the job must be carefully crafted taking cognizance of the technological and organizational requirements and the social and personal needs of the job incumbent (Carrell et al., 1998). The job design has a significant impact on the extent to which employees' personal needs are being met through their experiences in the organization, their quality of work life and ultimately, their job satisfaction. Therefore, job characteristics play a pivotal role in numerous organizational variables. Hence, a number of task characteristics theories have been developed that seek to identify task characteristics of jobs, how these characteristics are combined to form different jobs, and the relationship of these task characteristics to employee motivation, satisfaction and performance. Theories,

such as Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory, McClelland's achievement need, requisite task attributes theory and the job characteristics model have been used to find relationships between job characteristics and job satisfaction (Gardner & Cummings, 1988). As early as 1965, Turner and Lawrence assessed the effect of different kinds of jobs on employee satisfaction and absenteeism. They predicted that employees would prefer jobs that were complex and challenging, that is, such jobs would increase satisfaction and result in lower absence rates and hence, defined job complexity in terms of six task characteristics: (1) variety; (2) autonomy; (3) responsibility; (4) knowledge and skills; (5) required social interaction; and (6) optional social interaction.

In 1974, Hackman and Oldham's job characteristics model (JCM) used the foundations of requisite task attributes theory for defining task characteristics and understanding their relationship to employee motivation, performance, and satisfaction. The Job characteristics model identifies five job characteristics and their relationship to personal and work outcomes as:

- Skill variety: The degree to which the job requires a variety of different activities so the worker can use a number of different skills and talents (Krasman, 2012). McKnight, Phillips & Hardgrave (2009) found that skill variety is critical to Information Technology (IT) jobs.

- Task identity: The degree to which the job requires completion of a whole and identifiable piece of work.

- Task significance: The degree to which the job has a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people; in other words, how important the job appears to be (McKnight et al., 2009). Grant (2008) found that task significance increases an employee's feelings of social impact and social worth.

- Autonomy: The degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out (McKnight et al., 2009).

- Feedback: The degree to which carrying out the work activities required by the job results in the individual obtaining direct and clear information about the effectiveness of his or her performance (Syukrina, Noor Azzah, Noor'ain, Sri Fatiany, Dilla & Rudzi, 2014).

The first three dimensions, skill variety, task identity and task significance, combine to create meaningful work for the job incumbent (Johari & Yahya, 2009; Coelho & Augusto, 2010). When these three characteristics exist in a job, it can be predicted that the incumbent will view the job as being important, valuable and worthwhile and hence, has the potential to reduce turnover (McKnight et al., 2009). Jobs that possess autonomy give job incumbents a feeling of personal responsibility for the results and, if a job provides feedback, employees will

know how effectively they are performing. Results indicate that when employees perceive their jobs provide higher level of autonomy, identity and feedback, they experienced higher levels of job satisfaction (Bhuain & Menguc, 2002; Bhuain, Al-Shammari & Jefri, 2001; Borman, 2004; Chang & Lee, 2006; Kahya, 2007; Katsikea, Theodosiou, Perdakis & Kehagias, 2011; Noor Azzah & Rudzi, 2010; Syukrina et al., 2014). Krasman (2012) also found that the way jobs are designed may impact how often people seek feedback about their performance.

The Job Characteristics model depicts that internal rewards are obtained by individuals when they learn (knowledge of results) that they personally (experienced responsibility) have performed well on a task that they care about (experienced meaningfulness) (Dessler, 1998). The greater the extent to which these three psychological states are present, the higher the level of employees' motivation, performance and satisfaction and the lower their absenteeism and likelihood of leaving the organization (Luthans, 1989). Carrell et al. (1998) also emphasize the importance of job rotation as a job design strategy in motivation-intensive jobs rather than specialization-intensive jobs as it has the potential to motivate employees through organizational learning. Similarly, Hsieh & Chao (2004) found that employees from the high-tech industry have different job characteristics, for example, diversified tasks such that the professionalism and specialization of jobs will create greater benefits than job rotation.

Job rotation and learning in an organization

Job rotation is a process which enhances task variety by periodically (according to any time schedule, such as hourly, daily or weekly) shifting workers among jobs involving various tasks (Fox, 2000; Schermerhorn et al., 1991) such that they work at different tasks in varying positions for specified periods of time (Jorgensen, Davis, Kotowski, Aedla & Dunning, 2005). However, Carrell et al. (1998) defines job rotation as a technique designed to enhance employees' motivation as employees do not have the same routine job day after day (Kaymaz, 2010; Sanali, Bahron & Dousin, 2013). However, Mohsan, Nawaz & Khan (2012) noted a weak negative impact of job rotation on employee motivation. According to Fægri, Dybå & Dingsøyr (2010), job rotation allows experience from different roles, tasks and domains within the organization and therefore, increases the overlap of knowledge among the employees. Likewise, job rotation or cross training (Ho et al., 2009) may be used as a solution for employees who feel throttled by over-routinization and lack of challenge in their work, whereby the employee is rotated to another job, at the same level with similar skill requirements. Job rotation is viewed

as having numerous benefits including reducing boredom (Azizi, Zolfaghari & Liang, 2009), enhancing safety on the job and reducing stress (Aryanezhad, Kheirkhah, Deljoo & Al-e-hashem, 2009; Györkös, Becker, Massoudi, De Bruin & Rossier, 2012; Johnston, de Bruin, Geldenhuys, Györkös, Massoudi, Rossier, 2013; Jorgensen et al., 2005; Lindbeck & Snower, 2000; Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001; Rubino, Perry, Milam, Spitzmueller & Zapf, 2012; Sanali et al., 2013; Seçkiner & Kurt, 2007), increasing promotion opportunities, increasing performance and productivity (Origo & Pagani, 2008; Rashki, Hasanqasemi & Mazidi, 2014; Zare, 2005), enhancing human resource retention, flexibility, skill-based flexibility (multiskilling) (Bennett, 2003; To, 2011), enhancing workplace training and reform (Saravani & Abbasi, 2013), enhancing problem solving (Taylor & Greve, 2006), increasing job satisfaction (Ho et al., 2009; Jorgensen et al., 2005; Krasman, 2012; Nafei, 2014; Zare, 2005), intellectual development and innovation (Bennett, 2003; Delpasand, Raiisi, Begdely & Shahabi, 2010; Jorgensen et al., 2005; Lundvall & Nielsen, 2007), development of social human capital (Bennett, 2003) and ensuring timeous response. However, Allwood and Lee (2004) found that job rotation does not improve overall problem solving and does not improve productivity. Cheraskin and Campion (1996) believe that the most use of job rotation as a job design strategy is, and has been, in the manufacturing industry where the organization's capability to adapt to changing circumstances is imperative and organizational learning a fundamental to success (Banfield, Jennings & Beaver, 1996). DiBella and Nevis (1996) define organizational learning as the organization's capacity/processes to use experience to maintain/improve performance (DiBelta & Nevis, 1996). This activity involves "knowledge acquisition (the development or creation of skills, insights, relationships), knowledge sharing (the dissemination to others of what has been acquired by some) and knowledge utilization (integration of the learning so that it is assimilated, broadly available, and can also be generalized to new situations)" (Huber, 1991: 88). Through organizational socialization and lessons learned from past problems, knowledge and competence can be transferred between generations of employees. For example, in a typical Japanese organization, virtually every department will have an employee who knows the people, the problems, and the procedures of any other area within the organization and every employee knows that he/she will continue to move between functions, offices, and geographical locations throughout his/her career; this process of lifelong job rotation is a reality for all employees in numerous Japanese firms (Mescon, Albert & Khedouri, 1988) and managers are required to have a broad view of the entire firm (Eguchi, 2005).

Through lessons learned from past problems, personnel are able to identify defects or limitations of equipment, either in its design, construction or maintenance. Steps are taken to maintain systems or to create conditions that lower the risk of system failure. It has become evident that job rotation encourages a continuously learning organization which overcomes the following deficiencies in the management of employment and personal relations:

- A lack of personal and job flexibility.
- The creation of 'personal comfort zones' which reflect employee interest and preferences.
- Breakdowns in personal relations to the point where company co-ordination and interpersonal communication were compromised.
- A lack of clarity in job responsibilities.
- The absence of a sense of teamwork and shared responsibilities.
- An individual rather than a company perspective on work and employment (Banfield et al., 1996).

Challenges of job rotation

Job rotation addresses the problem of assigning employees to jobs of limited scope; the depth of the job does not change. The job cycle of the actual daily work performed has not be lengthened or changed. Instead, employees are simply assigned to different jobs with different cycles. Because job rotation does not change the basic nature of the jobs, it is criticized as nothing more than having employees perform several boring and monotonous jobs rather than one. Some employees dislike job rotation more than being assigned to one boring job because when they are assigned to one job, they know exactly where to report and what work to expect each day. Malinski (2002) found that experienced staff did not want to learn new job skills or move to other locations. Employees quickly realize that job rotation does not enhance their interest in their work (Carrell et al., 1998).

The cost in implementing job rotation is a challenge (Cheraskin & Campion, 1996; Malinski, 2002). Job rotation inevitably increases the workload and decreases productivity for the rotating employee and other employees in the short term that the employees are being trained. The result in the disruption of workflow and the cost will potentially focus on short-term solutions to correct these problems. The learning curve cost on the new job includes time spent learning, training costs and errors that employees potentially make while learning the new job (Cheraskin & Campion, 1996). Researchers also point out that there are other costs in terms of the satisfaction and motivation of other employees who are not rotating, such as non-participant jealousy (Cheraskin and Campion, 1996; Malinski, 2002) which Burke and Moore (2000) refer to as the reverberating effects of job rotation on nonrotating

employees. Current employees, however, will perceive a lack of internal mobility possibilities, and this may cause such reactions as high turnover and negative feelings toward new external hires (Heneman III, Heneman & Judge, 1997). There other possible costs, such as, the increase in department costs to pay for job rotation programs and increased amount of management time spent on lower level employees and administrative costs for running the job rotation program. In addition, Brunold & Durst (2012) found that managers in an organization that adopted job rotation used more time for the succession processes related to the job rotation process and other situations involving knowledge issues thereby demanding clearly planned hand-overs and a thorough introduction of top managers and employees which result in facing time pressures.

In addition, there is no guarantee that those employees that have excelled in the program will not leave if they are not promoted or do not receive adequate compensation at the end of the rotation. It is also possible that after all the effort put into the program by the organization and management, the employee leaves after being trained. When employees rotate too fast, the organization is unable to slow down the rate. Ripple effects occur in filling that post created by other vacant posts (Cheraskin & Campion, 1996). Therefore, managers need to be trained at managing the speed of rotation, largely because of enhanced succession-management practices.

Aims of the Study

This study assesses employees' level of satisfaction with the nature of work and specific job characteristics (task variety, challenge, remuneration, recognition and skills variety) and their perceived challenges of job rotation. Biographical influences on these were also assessed.

Research Design

Respondents

The study was undertaken in an operations environment of a textile company in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The population includes 77 full time shift employees in the organization and due to the small population size consensus sampling was used. According to Sekaran's (2003) population-to-sample size table, for a population of 77 the corresponding minimum sample of 65 is needed, thereby confirming the adequacy of the sample of 77 employees used in the study.

The sample may be differentiated based on gender, age, marital status, organizational level and tenure. Due to the nature of the work which entails wet processing of textile fabrics which requires strong physical abilities to work with and move large heavy objects and batch sizes, the typical composition of the

sample is predominantly males (96.1%) with only 3.9% being female employees. This is expected to change with greater automation of processes. The majority of the sample is from 26-29 years (70.1%), followed by 30-39 years (14.3%) and then 40-49 years (11.7%) and none of the employees are >50 years whilst 3.9% are < 20 years old. Hence, 96.% of the employees are young, that is, between 20 to 49 years of age. Furthermore, 81.8% of the employees are single while 18.2% are married. Operational staff comprised of 80.5% of the sample and the remaining 19.5% were supervisors with a span of control being approximately one supervisor to four operatives. The span of control is very important when employees are rotating their jobs as close supervision is needed during the training period or at the inception of the job rotation which changes when job rotation reaches a mature stage. In terms of tenures, the majority of the employees have worked in the organization for 6-12 months (54.5%) followed by < 6 months (27.3%), then 1-2 years (16.9%), and only 1.3% worked for 2-3 years.

Measuring Instrument

Data was collected using a self-developed, pre-coded, self-administered questionnaire consisting of two sections. Section A relate to biographical (gender, age, marital status, organizational level, tenure) and was assessed using the nominal scale with precoded option categories. Section B assessed employees' level of satisfaction with the nature of work and specific job characteristics (task variety, challenge, remuneration, recognition and skills variety) (5 items) and perceived challenges of job rotation (7 items). Biographical influences on employees' level of satisfaction with the nature of work and job dimensions and their perceived challenges of job rotation were also evaluated. Section B was measured using the Likert Scale ranging from strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neither agree nor disagree (3), agree (4) to strongly agree (5). Also, 2 items were negatively worded and the scales were noted and reversed when engaging in data capturing so that these were in line with those of the other items. The questionnaire was formulated on the basis of identifying recurring themes that surfaced while conducting the literature review. These ensured face and content validity. Furthermore, in-house pretesting was adopted to assess the suitability of the instruments. Pilot testing was also carried out on 15 employees using the same protocols that were utilized for the larger study to test the process, the appropriateness of questions and employees' understanding thereof. No inadequacies were reported and the final questionnaire was considered appropriate in terms of relevance and construction.

Research procedure

The research was only conducted after ethical clearance was obtained for the study and upon completion of the pilot study.

Reliability of the questionnaire

The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. The items were reflected as having a good level of internal consistency and reliability, with the Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha for the items measuring employees' level of satisfaction with the nature of work and job characteristics and their perceived challenges of job rotation as being 0.7143.

Statistical analysis of the data

Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum) and inferential statistics (t-test, ANOVA) were used to evaluate the objectives and hypotheses of the study.

Results

Employees' level of overall satisfaction with their current nature of work and with the job characteristics were assessed using a 1-5 point Likert scale (Table 1). The higher the mean score value, the greater is the level of satisfaction with the dimension being measured.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics – Employees' satisfaction with their nature of work and the job dimensions

Dimension	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Overall satisfaction with current nature of work	3.34	0.68	1	5
Task variety	3.38	1.33	1	5
Challenge	3.04	1.50	1	5
Remuneration	2.65	1.50	1	5
Recognition	3.29	1.22	1	5
Skills variety	4.47	0.64	2	5

Table 1 reflects that employees are relatively satisfied with their current nature of work (Mean = 3.34). However, with a mean of 3.34 against a maximum attainable score of 5, there is certainly room for improvement. Table 1 also indicates that employees have varying degrees of satisfaction with specific job characteristics which in descending level of satisfaction are:

- Skills variety (Mean = 4.47)
- Task variety (Mean = 3.38)
- Recognition (Mean = 3.29)
- Challenge (Mean = 3.04)
- Remuneration (Mean = 2.65)

Whilst employees were very satisfied with the skills variety in their job, there exists room for improvement in terms of all other job dimensions (task variety, recognition, challenge and

remuneration). In order to assess where these areas of improvement lie, frequency analyses were conducted. Whilst 94.8% of the employees experienced skills variety, only 46.8% agreed that they had task variety, only 50.7% felt they were recognized and appreciated, only 48.7% felt that their job was challenging and only 35.1% were satisfied with their remuneration.

Inferential statistics were also undertaken to assess whether employees varying in biographical profiles (division, marital status, organizational level, age, tenure) differ in their overall satisfaction with their current nature of work.

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant difference in the level of overall satisfaction of employees varying in biographical profiles (gender, marital status, organizational level, age, tenure) regarding their current nature of work respectively (Table 2).

Table 2. t-Test and ANOVA: Overall satisfaction of employees regarding their current nature of work and biographical profiles

Biographical Variable	t-Test	ANOVA	Significance (p)
Gender	9.278		0.003*
Marital status	0.68		0.795
Organizational level	1.939		0.168
Age		0.884	0.454
Tenure		0.923	0.434

* $p < 0.01$

Table 2 indicates that male and female employees differ significantly in their overall satisfaction regarding their current nature of work, at

the 1% level of significance. However, this result must be assessed with caution as women only make up 3.9% of the employees evaluated due to the nature

of the job. Table 2 also reflects that no other biographical influences were observed. In other words, marital status, organizational level, age and tenure do not influence the level of overall satisfaction that employees experience on the job. Hence, hypothesis 1 may only be partially accepted in terms of gender.

Employee perceptions of the overall challenges of job rotation and each identified challenge of rotation were assessed using the 1-5 point Likert scale (Table 3). The higher the mean score value, the greater the perceived challenge.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics – Employees’ perceptions of the overall challenge of job rotation and each identified challenge of rotation

Dimension	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Job rotation causes undue stress.	2.94	1.12	1	5
Job rotation increases work pressure.	3.40	1.17	1	5
Job rotation is not formally developed.	4.39	0.68	2	5
Job rotation causes an increase in costs in the short term.	3.30	1.08	1	5
Job rotation disrupts work flow in the short term.	3.36	1.05	1	5
Job rotation causes productivity to be decreased in the short term.	3.19	1.27	1	5
Job rotation causes a lowering of motivation of those employees that are not rotated in the short term.	3.27	1.08	1	5
Overall challenge of job rotation	3.27	0.76	2	5

Table 3 indicates that employees perceive the challenges as occurring in varying degrees, which in descending level are:

- Job rotation is not formally developed (Mean = 4.39).
- Job rotation increases work pressure (Mean = 3.40).
- Job rotation disrupts work flow in the short term (Mean = 3.36).
- Job rotation causes an increase in costs in the short term (Mean = 3.30).
- Job rotation causes a lowering of motivation of those employees that are not rotated in the short term (Mean = 3.27).
- Job rotation causes productivity to be decreased in the short term (Mean = 3.19).
- Job rotation causes undue stress (Mean = 2.94).

Evidently, the greatest challenge that employees perceive resulting from job rotation is that it is not formally developed. The mean score (4.39) which lies close to the maximum attainable score of 5 indicates that employees strongly view the lack of a formally developed rotation as being a challenge. In this regard, frequency analyses were undertaken and it was found that 89.7% of the employees felt that job rotation is not formally developed. Furthermore, 52% of the employees respectively reflected that job

rotation increases work pressure and disrupts work flow in the short term. Also, 44.2% of the employees felt that job rotation causes an increase in costs in the short term, and 42.9% respectively indicated that it causes a lowering of motivation of those employees that are not rotated in the short term and that it causes productivity to be decreased in the short term. Ironically, that job rotation causes undue stress was identified as the smallest challenge; though the Mean of 2.94 reflects a fair amount of perceived challenge against a maximum attainable score of 5. In this regard, 29.9% of the employees indicated that job rotation causes undue stress. The overall challenge of job rotation (Mean = 3.27) indicates that all aspects of job rotation as presented in Table 3 pose a fair (Mean = 2.94) to extreme (Mean = 4.39) degree of perceived challenge.

Inferential statistics were also undertaken to assess whether employees varying in biographical profiles (gender, division, marital status, organizational level, age, tenure) differ in their perceptions of the challenges of job rotation.

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant difference in the perception of employees varying in biographical profiles (gender, marital status, organizational level, age, tenure) regarding the challenges of job rotation (Table 4).

Table 4. t-Test and ANOVA: Employee perceptions of the challenges of job rotation and biographical profiles

Biographical Variable	t-Test	ANOVA	Significance (p)
Gender	1.867		0.176
Marital status	2.221		0.141
Organizational level	0.768		0.384
Age		1.146	0.337
Tenure		1.890	0.139

Table 4 indicates that there is no significant difference in the perception of employees varying in biographical profiles (gender, marital status, organizational level, age, tenure) regarding the challenges of job rotation respectively. Hence, hypothesis 1 may be rejected.

Discussion of Results

In this study it was found that employees are relatively satisfied with their current nature of work which includes all job characteristics. Similarly, Igbara, Parasuraman & Badawy (1994), Chang and Lee (2006) and Syukrina et al. (2014) summed the constructs of the job characteristics and found that the sum was highly correlated with job satisfaction. In this study, employees were very satisfied with the skills variety in their job. However, Saavedra and Kwun (2000) argue that skill variety promotes performance distress and makes people less relaxed and more nervous. The study also reflects that there exists room for improvement in terms of all other job dimensions (task variety, recognition, challenge and remuneration). In order to assess where these areas of improvement lie, frequency analyses were conducted. Of concern was that only 46.8% agreed that they had task variety, especially since Katsikea et al. (2011) noted a strong relationship between job variety and job satisfaction and Bhuian et al. (1996) found that task variety influences employees commitment. Furthermore, in this study, only 50.7% felt they were recognized and appreciated, and only 48.7% felt that their job was challenging. Melamed, Ben-Avi, Luz and Green (1995) confirm that lack of job challenge leads to unproductive behaviours and poor attitude to work, Lip-Bluman and Leavitt (1999) emphasized the importance of challenging work and Goff (1999) suggests job rotation as an avenue for employees to stay challenged, feel fulfilled and to develop a sense of loyalty to the organization.

Evidently, the greatest challenge that employees perceive resulting from job rotation is that it is not formally developed. Furthermore, 52% of the employees respectively reflected that job rotation increases work pressure and disrupts work flow in the short term. Also, 44.2% of the employees felt that job rotation causes an increase in costs in the short term. Cheraskin & Campion (1996) attribute some of this additional expense to learning curve cost. It was also found that 42.9% of the employees respectively indicated that job rotation causes a lowering of motivation of those employees that are not rotated in

the short term and that it causes productivity to be decreased in the short term. In this regard, Burke and Moore (2000) caution about the reverberating effects of job rotation on non-rotating employees and Malinski (2002) highlight costs caused by non-participant jealousy. In addition, Allwood and Lee (2014) maintain that job rotation does not improve productivity; rather specialization may be more beneficial than broad exposure especially in terms of problem solving and improving productivity. Contrary to this, researchers have found that job rotation increases performance and productivity (Origo & Pagani, 2008; Rashki et al., 2014; Zare, 2005). Furthermore, that job rotation causes undue stress was identified as the smallest challenge in this study; though the Mean of 2.94 reflects a fair amount of perceived challenge against a maximum attainable score of 5. In this regard, 29.9% of the employees indicated that job rotation causes undue stress. Ho et al. (2009) caution that role stress exercises negative influences on both job satisfaction and organizational commitment. However, numerous studies found that job rotation enhances safety on the job and reduces stress (Aryanezhad, Kheirkhah, Deljoo & Al-e-hashem, 2009; Györkös et al., 2012; Johnston et al., 2013; Jorgensen et al., 2005; Lindbeck & Snower, 2000; Maslach et al., 2001; Rubino et al., 2012; Sanali et al., 2013; Seçkiner & Kurt, 2007).

The influence of biographical variables is minimal and was observed in terms of gender but with caution due to the gender skewness of the sample.

Conclusion

The results reflect some doubt regarding the potential for job rotation to reduce work pressure and stress and, indicate the potential of job rotation to disrupt work flow in the short-term and reduce productivity as a result of a reduction in motivation of those employees that are not rotating. These results emphasize the importance of ensuring that the job rotation design is well planned, has the commitment of top management and line managers and is pilot tested before final implementation. Furthermore, once implemented, the job rotation must be well managed. In other words, it must be a formally structured program with stringent control and monitoring systems. Good interpersonal relations and a culture of continuous learning are also imperative to ensure knowledge sharing and experiential learning as these contribute to the success of job rotation.

Recommendations for Future Research

The study is a cross sectional study which makes it difficult to determine whether the commitment curve to job rotation will change significantly with the passage of time. A longitudinal study will provide greater insight into the perceptions of employees after they have witnessed the benefits of job rotation to themselves and the organization. The study was undertaken in an organization in the declining textile industry. It would be useful to assess perceptions about the challenges of job rotation in a pioneer industry or another company where experiences may be significantly different.

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