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Research on the Impact Mechanism of the Evaluative and Developmental Performance Appraisal on Overwork of Knowledge-Based Employees

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ABSTRACT

In the era of knowledge economy, knowledge-based employees have irreplaceable importance to the sustainable development of enterprises. However, the various deviations in the performance appraisal of knowledgebased employees, such as excessively quantified performance indicators, unreasonable assessment cycle, excessive evaluation standards etc., have led to the increasingly serious overwork problem of knowledge-based employees. According to the goal orientation of performance appraisal, it can be divided into evaluative performance appraisal and developmental performance appraisal. Forced spontaneous overwork and spontaneous overwork are two forms of overwork of knowledge-based employees. Different goal orientation of performance appraisal has different influences on overwork of knowledgebased employees. This paper analyzes the overwork problem caused by the goal orientation of performance appraisal, and discusses how the performance appraisal of different goal orientations affects the overwork of knowledgebased employees. Based on the self-determination theory, motivation can be divided into autonomous motivation and controlled motivation. The perception of the external environment and the inner self of knowledge-based employees affect individual motivation. It is concluded that the evaluative performance appraisal linked the appraisal results with salary, job promotion, etc., forms the high-pressure, threatening atmosphere and enhances the individual's controlled motives, in order to complete the task and avoid punishment, resulting knowledge-based employees in forced spontaneous overwork. Developmental performance appraisal links the assessment results with training development and career, etc., forms the incentive, selfindependent and inclusive atmosphere and enhances the individual's autonomous motivation, in order to pursue self-achievement, resulting knowledge-based employees in spontaneous overwork.

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KEYWORDS: Performance appraisal; Autonomous motivation; Controlled motivation; Knowledge-based employees; Overwork

In recent years, the phenomenon of overwork has shown a rapid upward trend in China, and the social problem of "overwork death" arising from developed countries has begun to enter China. In particular, the problem of overwork of knowledge-based employees has continued to deteriorate in China. In 2010, Wang Dan and Yang Heging investigated the overworked status of employees in 11 occupational scientific including categories research, accounting/auditing, HR and physicians in Beijing through questionnaires. The survey found that 27.27% of workers in the "green light safety zone", 33.58% in the "yellow light warning zone", 27.64% in the "red light danger zone", and 11.52 percent in the "deep red light high level zone" (Wang Dan & Yang Heqing, 2010, p38). A total of 826 articles (up to April 7, 2019) were searched in the CNKI database with the topics including "overwork", "excessive labor" and "overwork death", after excluding the literature unrelated to the research topic. Among them, 419 academic journal

papers, 326 newspapers, 10 Chinese conference papers, 67 master's thesis papers, and 4 doctoral dissertations. According to statistics, Chinese scholars' literature research on intellectuals, knowledge workers and knowledge-based talents accounted for 54.4%. As can be seen from the above data, the overwork problem in China, especially the overwork problem of knowledge-based employees, cannot be ignored. If it is not widely concerned by the society, it will not only cause irreparable harm to employees and families, but also affect the sustainable and stable development of enterprises. The driving force behind the overwork of knowledge-based employees is closely related to the goal orientation of enterprise performance appraisal.

1. Concept Definition and Literature Review

1.1. Concept Definition

1.1.1. Knowledge-based Employees

Scholars have different opinions on the definition of knowledge-based employees, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Definition of knowledge-based employees

Scholars	Definition of knowledge worker
Peter Drucker (1956)	One who works with symbols and concepts, using knowledge or information
March & Simon (1993).	The job mainly involves information processing and communication
Frances Horibe (2000)	People who use their brains more than their hands to create wealth. They bring added value to products through their own creativity, analysis, judgment, integration and design
Thomas H. Davenport (2007)	They have high professional ability, educational background and industry experience, and the main purpose of their work is the creation, sharing and application of knowledge
Yang Jie et al. (2004)	People who work in knowledge jobs
Qian Changsheng (2006)	Apply the knowledge learned in the company, and take knowledge as the main work content, pursue independence, pay attention to the group of independent and flexible work and personal development
Zhao Xiuqing (2012)	A person who creates social wealth by brainwork, innovates constantly with the knowledge he/she has mastered, and makes great contributions to the development of enterprises and society
Wang Juan (2018)	Knowledge and information as a means of livelihood, pay attention to autonomy, full of personality and learning innovation ability, for the enterprise to create benefits and capital appreciation
Wang Zhong et al. (2019)	Employees who work in enterprises by virtue of their knowledge and skills can bring knowledge accumulation and value-added to the organization, improve organizational innovation ability, and bring high added value to products or services

Based on the research of scholars, it is found that scholars define knowledge-based employees from different perspectives, which can be summarized as the following four aspects: work content, working mode, nature of work, and employee characteristics. Although it is very difficult to define knowledge-based employees clearly, it is undoubted that knowledge-based employees, as the core resource of an enterprise, use their knowledge to create value for theenterprise. Based on this, this paper holds that knowledge-based employees refer to those who have knowledge capital and create wealth for enterprises and society mainly by means of brainwork. They are both the owners of knowledge and users of knowledge. Research and development personnel, financial practitioners, creative workers, lawyers, editors/journalists, HR, middle and senior managers are all knowledge-based employees.

1.1.2. Overwork

Scholars mainly defined "overwork" from three aspects: labor behavior, physical and mental health of workers and extreme consequences caused by excessive labor.

In 2006, Wang Aiqing proposed that excessive labor refers to "the excessive use of human resources in a long period of time, that is, the employed people are in a state of employment that exceeds the average labor time and intensity of the society for a long period of time" (Wang Aiqing, 2006, p43). In 2016, Wang Xin and Yang Heqing pointed out that "overwork" includes two meanings: behavioral state and outcome state. From the perspective of behavioral state, "overwork" is the abbreviation of "excessive labor", which refers to the timeout and super-strong work input state; From the perspective of the result state, "overwork" is a kind of early warning signal of physical and mental health, which means that in the process of production activities, the laborers have long suffered from the workload, working time, work intensity, etc. beyond their physical and mental capacity. As a result, fatigue continues to accumulate, the homeostasis of physiological functions and psychological self-regulation mechanisms are disrupted, and human health is in an unbalanced state that has not been restored by short-term sleep and rest adjustment. (Wang Xin & Yang Heqing, 2016, p105).

Overwork is generally measured by working hours and labor intensity, but whether the laborer is in the state of "overwork" is usually judged according to health symptoms. In general, overworked employees are not only accompanied by physical symptoms such as insomnia, forgetfulness, headache, chest tightness, but also accompanied by psychological symptoms such as depression, loss of work enthusiasm, and even worse, may lead to mental breakdown or sudden death. In 1989, Ueheta confirmed that excessive labor is the direct cause of overwork death through empirical research methods (Ueheta, 1989, p3-17). In 2014, Yellow River introduced Japan's latest Accumulated Fatigue Survey Scale CFSI, which consists of 81 questions related to physical and mental symptoms, status, etc., such as: "No appetite recently", "No patience", "Tear a little bit of a temper", etc.. Indirectly judge the state of fatigue through the subjective feelings of the workers, and carry out "pre-existing prevention", especially the mental health management that is not easy to detect (Yellow River, 2014, p23-28).

1.2. Literature Review

Enterprises are the economic subjects that pursue wealth. The realization of strategic goals depends on the results of their work. As a tool to measure the results of employees' work, performance appraisal has been widely applied to the management process of various enterprises and institutions. The characteristics of the company and the type of employees are different. Therefore, the performance appraisal methods and contents of the company are different. The most important thing is to meet the actual needs of employees and enterprises (Fan Zheng, 2010, p51). According to the performance appraisal goal

orientation, it can be divided into evaluative performance appraisal and developmental performance appraisal (Meyer et al., 1965; Wen Peng & Liao Jianqiao, 2010). Evaluative performance appraisal compares the performance of the employee with the standards set by the company, other employee performance or the past performance of the individual, and the results of the comparison are used as the basis for salary management, promotion and dismissal, and performance identification; Developmental performance appraisal is committed to improving employee attitudes, enriching their experience and skills, and improving employee effectiveness, mainly including identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the individual, setting goals and determining training needs (Boswell & Boudreau, 2002, p392). Knowledge-based employees have the characteristics of high education level and personal quality, strong work autonomy and innovation ability, self-realization demand, and fast knowledge renewal period. Performance appraisal with different goal orientation affects the work behavior of knowledgebased employees, and induces various behavioral responses. How the goal orientation of performance appraisal affects the overwork of knowledge-based employees is an important topic worth studying.

In 2018, Wang Xin distinguished between "forced spontaneous" and "spontaneous" overwork based on the difference in willingness to overwork, providing a new perspective for overworked research (Wang Xin, 2018, p57). In short, "forced spontaneous" overwork is an involuntary behavior that forces employees to work long hours under the influence of certain factors (such as overtime culture, assessment standards, economic compensation, competitive living pressure, etc.). "Spontaneous" overwork is a kind of voluntary behavior. Influenced by their internal drive (such as the pursuit of perfection, self-realization, professional achievement, etc.), employees are enthusiastic about their work and take the initiative to extend working hours and increase work intensity. The self-determination theory proposed by American psychologists Edward L. Deci and Ryan Richard M. is a motivational process theory of human self-determination behavior. It is based on fully understanding individual needs and environmental information, and individuals make free choices for their own actions. In 2005, Gagne M and Edward L. Deci describe self-determination theory as work motivation theory. Based on the fact that individuals are more likely to feel that behavior is autonomous or externally controlled, the motivation is further divided into autonomous motivation and controlled motivation (Gagne M & Edward L. Deci, 2005, p333). Factors such as tangible rewards, time limits, mandatory goals, linking performance appraisal and rewards or punishments enhance individual sense of control, and promote controlled motivation; Work interests and challenges, task participation, emotional recognition, and opportunities for self-determination enhance individual self-selection and internal satisfaction and promote autonomous motivation. Different levels of motivation will produce different behavioral results, and the level of individual motivation is affected by self-needs and external environmental factors. So, how does the goal orientation of performance appraisal affect the individual motivation of knowledge-based employees? How does individual motivation affect the overwork of knowledge-based employees? Direct research is lacking.

In summary, the study starts from the theory of self-determination, links performance appraisal with individual motivation, and examines the impact mechanism on the overwork of knowledge-based employees. By distinguishing different purpose of performance appraisal (evaluative and developmental), behavioral motives with different natures (autonomous motivation and controlled motivation), and excessive labor with different wills (forced spontaneity overwork and spontaneous overwork), this paper explores the mechanism of the performance appraisal goal orientation on the excessive labor of knowledge workers. From the theoretical level, the relationship between performance appraisal and excessive labor of knowledge-based employees can be clarified. From the application level, it can help enterprises to conduct more scientific and reasonable performance appraisal of knowledge-based employees, improve their job satisfaction and loyalty, and retain core talents for enterprises.

2. Performance Appraisal Status of Knowledge-based Employees and the Problem of Overwork

There are many methods for performance appraisal, which are mainly divided into the following three types: trait-oriented, behavior-oriented, and result-oriented. The main performance appraisal methods of enterprises for knowledge-based employees are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Main performance appraisal methods of knowledge-based employees

Performance appraisal type	Performance appraisal method
Trait-oriented	Mixed standard scales method Decompose the assessment dimension according to the work characteristics of knowledge workers, pay attention to the behavior pattern of knowledge-based employees. Text descriptions are difficult to reflect the complexity and actual performance of knowledge-based employees; time consuming. Comment method Pay attention to the achievements and deficiencies, potential ability, suggestions for improvement, and training methods of knowledge workers. The comments are subjective, mostly using qualitative descriptions, lack of quantitative data, and insufficient basis for making personnel decisions.
Behavior- oriented	Behaviorally anchor rating method The relative independence of each element can improve the accuracy of the comprehensive evaluation of knowledge-based employees. The work of knowledge-based employees is irreplaceable, and the empirical description is prone to deviations.

	Forced distribution method The performance ranking of knowledge-based employees is clear at a glance. Knowledge-based employees with different job types have different output cycles, and the evaluation lacks
	timeliness and accuracy.
Result-oriented	Objective management method
	Emphasizing self-control helps to stimulate the creativity of knowledge-based employees.
	This method tends to be short-term goals, and the long work cycle of knowledge-based
	employees makes it difficult to measure the achievement of goals during the assessment period.
	Key performance indicator method
	It can provide specific events for assessing knowledge-based employees, clarify key tasks and
	provide timely feedback.
	The key performance indicators of knowledge-based employees are difficult to design, and their
	work results and contributions are difficult to measure.

Therefore, it can be seen from the existing knowledge-based employees performance appraisal methods that the objectives of performance appraisal can be divided into two types, one is for "employee reward and punishment" and the other is for "employee development". The former belongs to the evaluative performance appraisal, focusing on improving organizational performance, judging the pros and cons of employees through the appraisal results. The latter belongs to the developmental performance appraisal, focusing on promoting organizational performance and tapping the development potential of employees through assessment results. Performance appraisal with different goal orientations affects knowledge-based employees' perception of work stress. Different perceptions of stress make knowledge-based employees intentionally or unintentionally increase their work hours and work intensity, which ultimately leads to overwork.

Evaluative performance appraisal is sorted according to the degree of excellence, and the appraisal results directly affect the salary and the position of the knowledge-based employees. Some enterprises do not consider the work characteristics of knowledge-based employees when setting assessment targets. On the one hand, the performance appraisal standards are beyond the scope of knowledge-based employees, and the indicators are too detailed and quantified. On the other hand, knowledge-based employees have a strong need for self-respect. For knowledge workers who have a long output cycle and cannot complete company indicators during the assessment period, they have to increase their work time and work intensity in order to avoid the risk of punishment or even unemployment, and compulsively put pressure on employees in the invisible. Excessive labor for a long time directly causes physical and psychological damage to employees, which can easily lead to various diseases.

Developmental performance appraisal emphasizes the feedback and application of appraisal, and the appraisal results directly affect employee training and capacity development plans. Knowledge-based employees recognize that performance appraisal is a help rather than a punishment process, and employees will put pressure on themselves for personal development. Developmental performance appraisal does not make knowledge-based employees feel the environment of high pressure, coercion and threat, but the employees being assessed can clearly recognize their own deficiencies. In order to constantly surpass themselves, they will invest more time and energy in their work, such as studying in their spare time and improving their professional knowledge and skills, which undoubtedly increases the chance of excessive labor.

The Impact Mechanism Model of Performance Appraisal Goal Orientation on Overwork of Knowledge-based **Employees**

Nowadays, performance appraisal has been closely integrated into the activities of enterprise human resource management and has become the core of the entire human resource management system. It can be seen from the existing main performance appraisal methods for knowledge-based employees that evaluative performance appraisal and developmental performance appraisal are inseparable. The human resources department of the enterprise conducts performance appraisal of knowledgebased employees. Knowledge workers' views of assessment content and assessment results affect their perception of performance appraisal purposes. The performance appraisal of different goal orientations causes different overwork willingness of employees, and ultimately whether excessive labor behavior is generated, which in turn affects the physical and mental health of employees, emotional awareness and the actual work performance, thus affecting the enterprise human resources management and development. The process of performance appraisal goal orientation on the overwork of knowledge-based employees is shown in Figure 1.

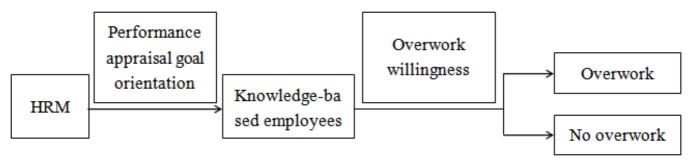


Figure 1 the process of performance appraisal goal orientation on the overwork of knowledge-based employees

So, how does the knowledge-based employee's overwork willingness arise? How does excessive labor willingness affect the overwork of knowledge-based employees? This paper proposes the influence mechanism model shown in Figure 2.

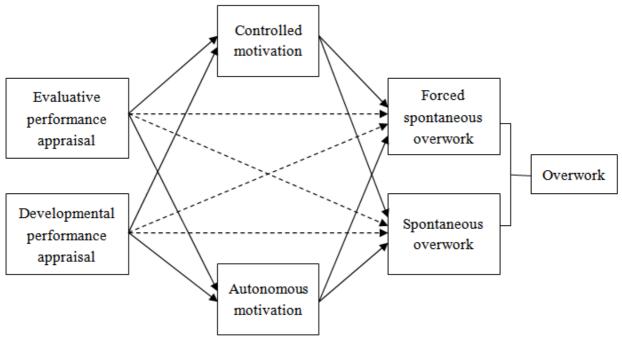


Figure 2 The impact mechanism model of performance appraisal goal orientation on overwork of knowledgebased employees

Knowledge-based employees' perception of the external environment and internal-self influences the excessive labor willingness, and employees with overwork willingness have greater possibility of overwork. Motivation is the psychological process of stimulating individual behavior, and it has the function of activation, orientation, maintenance and adjustment for the occurrence and development of behavior. According to the self-determination theory, the controlled motivation is closely related to the perception of the external environment. The autonomous motivation is closely related to the perception of the inner self. Different motivations affect the likelihood that knowledge-based employees will forced spontaneous overwork and spontaneous overwork. Therefore, the analysis from the two aspects of autonomous motivation and controlled motivation can more intuitively reflect the impact mechanism of performance assessment goal orientation on the overwork of knowledgebased employees.

3.1. Evaluative Performance Appraisal

Evaluative performance appraisal promotes the controlled motivation of knowledge-based employees, resulting in forced spontaneous overwork. Evaluative performance appraisal emphasizes the reward, mandatory goal and stress assessment. Based on the past performance of the employees, it provides decision-making reference for salary management and job change, and creates a high-pressure, strict, tough, and threatening atmosphere for employees, the sense of control of knowledge-based employees is enhanced, and controlled motivation is promoted.

A. Perception of fairness:

Linking the personal performance of knowledge-based employees with salary and position changes reflects the rationality of the evaluation results, which is conducive to motivating employees to work harder, but it will inevitably affect the employees' fair perception. If knowledge-based employees feel that the evaluative performance appraisal is fair, then this assessment method is motivating. They may think that as long as they improve their work performance, they can get high income and position promotion. In order not to lag behind others, they are willing to pay more time to work, and it is extremely easy to stay in high-intensity work for a long time. If knowledge-based employees feel that the evaluative performance appraisal is unfair, some employees will maintain the status quo, and even if they fail to complete the task, they will not put too much pressure on themselves,

so the possibility of overwork is very low. Some employees, although they are dissatisfied, will still complete the assessment requirements as much as possible, but this kind of work status will make the knowledge-based employees feel that they have no autonomy. Repressed mood affects work efficiency, which not only lengthens the work front but also detrimental to the physical and mental health of knowledge-based employees.

B. Way of working:

The work of knowledge-based employees is mainly projectbased and team-based work, and work hours, work standards, assessment deadlines, and work results cannot be quantified. Their work has a great risk of failure, but many companies regard success as the sole basis for performance appraisal. Knowledge-based employees have to work long hours in order to pass the assessment, which ultimately leads to individual forced spontaneous overwork. In addition, the personal contribution of team members is difficult to measure, and if the use of performance appraisal results, such as promotion, demotion, salary increase, salary reduction, etc., lacks a clear factual basis, it is very likely to generate interest disputes, trigger internal contradictions, and even disband the team. The task that was originally completed through teamwork needs to be completed by the individual employee, increases the work pressure and work intensity. In order to complete the assessment requirements,

knowledge-based employees may be forced to spontaneously overwork.

3.2. Developmental Performance Appraisal

Developmental performance appraisal promotes the autonomous motivation of knowledge-based employees, resulting in spontaneous overwork. It combines assessment results with career planning, communicates with employees through performance feedback, clarifies their training needs, enables individuals to feel the importance and recognition of the organization, enhances the individual's internal satisfaction, and promotes autonomous motivation.

A. Pressure perception. Developmental performance appraisal creates a working atmosphere for knowledgebased employees with inclusive errors, effective communication, trust and cooperation, and independent innovation. It links individual performance with training development and career development, pays attention to future performance improvement of employees, and helps knowledge-based employees achieve self-improvement. However, from the perspective of enterprise human resource management and company benefits, knowledgebased employees with better performance and greater development potential can bring more value to the company. Therefore, companies will invest more time and energy on these employees. For the "quality stocks" in the eyes of managers, comprehensive and continuous training keeps employees in the state of assessment for a long time. Although employees know that this assessment is a kind of help rather than punishment, it will still increase the psychological pressure of employees. In order to live up to the company's cultivation and realize its own value, they improve their professional knowledge and skills through constantly learning. Excessive work commitment and concentration can easily make knowledge-based employees overwork. For knowledge-based employees who are relatively weak in the eyes of managers, employees who feel that they are not valued may reduce their enthusiasm for work, so there is little chance of overwork. Employees with strong self-esteem and desire for achievement will be full of enthusiasm. They hope that they can become "quality stocks" by improving their abilities, and unwittingly increase the risk of overwork in the process of striving to achieve their goals.

B. Inner will. For knowledge-based employees, it is important to give certain external pressures, but the individual's inner will is more critical. Knowledge-based employees have high autonomy. Under the developmental performance appraisal, they are willing to combine the goals of the organization with the goals of themselves, which is conducive to increasing the emotional dependence on the organization and improving organizational loyalty. In addition, knowledge workers have higher achievement motivations, the personality traits of high self-fulfilling needs and the pursuit of perfectionist make them more active in increasing their working time and effort. The powerful internal drive enhances the individual's autonomous motivation and produces spontaneous overwork.

4. Conclusions and Deficiencies

According to the goal orientation of performance appraisal, it can be divided into evaluative performance appraisal and developmental performance appraisal. Controlled

motivation and autonomous motivation as mediating variables influence the overwork willingness of knowledgebased employees and affects their excessive labor behavior. We draw the following conclusions:

- Evaluative performance appraisal promotes knowledgebased employees to forced spontaneous overwork.
- Developmental performance appraisal promotes knowledge-based employees to spontaneous overwork.
- C. The controlled motivation enhances the impact of evaluative performance appraisal on the forced spontaneous overwork of knowledge-based employees.
- D. The autonomous motivation enhances the impact of developmental performance appraisal on the spontaneous overwork of knowledge-based employees.

Knowledge-based employees are the special human capital of enterprises. The knowledge and skills they possess are uniquely needed by enterprises. Their value increases with the increase of work experience and helps enterprises to obtain more benefits. The performance appraisal of knowledge-based employees should not be too harsh. Objective assessment indicators, appropriate assessment time, and effective assessment feedback can alleviate the psychological pressure of knowledge-based employees. The love of work is more helpful than the mandatory assessment to stimulate the autonomy and creativity of knowledgebased employees.

There are still some shortcomings in this paper: first, only considering the impact of performance appraisal on the overwork of knowledge-based employees, there is no detailed explanation on how the overwork of knowledge workers affects the performance appraisal and the "feedback mechanism" of enterprise human resource management. Second, only from the theoretical level to explore the impact mechanism of performance appraisal goal orientation on the overwork of knowledge-based employees, the research conclusion lacks empirical analysis. It is hope that in the future research, we can carry out empirical tests, further deepen the understanding of the performance appraisal of knowledge-based employees, pay attention to the work characteristics of knowledge-based employees different from ordinary employees, and reasonably quantify and evaluate their work performance.

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