



The Pursuit of an Employment Relationship: Managing People in a Flexible Labor Market
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English Summary

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Managing People in a Flexible Labor Market

This dissertation focuses on investigating the consequences of today's flexible labor market on the jobs, careers, and employment relationships of workers. On the one hand, due to the changing nature of the world of work, workers are increasingly required to self-regulate, and to be adaptable and proactive in their jobs and careers. On the other hand, the rise and spread of non-traditional employment arrangements such as temporary and platform work, bring about challenges to the traditional conceptualization of management of the employment relationship which has consequences for the workers themselves. The research presented in this dissertation therefore aims to answer the following research questions: What are the self-regulatory behaviors that individuals can implement at different stages of their careers, and what are their benefits? What can be done from an HRM point of view to manage the employment relationships of those who work in non-traditional employment arrangements?

The results of Chapter 2 indicate that individuals who engage in a self-regulatory job search process in the six months before entering the labor market have more chances of finding a job, of finding a job that suits them, and of experiencing higher wellbeing. That is, those with an increasing level of job search self-efficacy (i.e., the belief or confidence that one can successfully obtain job search outcomes) have a higher likelihood not only of finding a job, but also of finding a job that fits them, in terms of the match with their qualifications, abilities, and skills. Interestingly, such beliefs showed to be more relevant than the implementation of job search behaviors per se.

The results of Chapter 3 indicate that workers characterized by higher career adaptabilities (i.e., self-regulatory competency measured in terms of four adaptability resources: concern, control, curiosity, and confidence) are more likely to be more engaged with their work, through implementing proactive behaviors at work. More specifically, adaptable workers reach a higher level of engagement in their jobs by crafting their jobs (i.e., initiating small actions aimed at proactively changing different parts of their jobs, such as expanding its task, relational, cognitive, and skill boundaries). Moreover, when managers offer HRM practices aimed at enhancing the workers' opportunities to perform (i.e., work-life balance, participation, and information sharing practices) this can help adaptable workers in proactively shaping their jobs.

The results of Chapter 4 indicate that temporary agency workers who perceived a higher level of a set of HRM practices (i.e., challenging work, realistic workload, flexible work, discretion, pay

and recognition, career development, job security, training) implemented by both the agency they are employed at and by the company they work for, have more positive attitudes towards their work and towards both organizations. Also, the considerations around one employment relationship do seem to affect the other employment relationship, thus indicating the importance of examining both relationships when studying this type of workers. We showed this by applying latent profile analysis to workers' perceptions of implemented HRM practices in order to apply a holistic approach to the dual employment relationship of this specific kind of workers.

The results of Chapter 5 indicate that for on-location platform-determined routine workers (i.e., low-skilled work, delivered offline and assigned by the platform through an offer, like taxi or food delivery services), working more hours through platforms is associated with a better level of work-life balance and satisfaction with their jobs, only if they also perceive a set of basic HRM practices (i.e., selection, training, participation, autonomy, competitive compensation) as being implemented by the platform. Instead, when such HRM practices are perceived as low, working more through platforms is detrimental for workers' attitudes and well-being. Furthermore, by means of qualitative interviews, we gained insights on when and how the exchange between workers and platforms ultimately resemble a (perhaps so far denied) employment relationship.

Overall, the studies in this dissertation point at the importance of different self-regulatory behaviors implemented by workers in multiple moments of their careers, as well as at the relevance of managing workers in non-traditional employment contexts such as temporary and platform work. Both employees' self-regulation and their employment relationships have an impact on employees, in terms of their attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and well-being.