The Factors of EMBA Participators’ School Selection

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Abstract

In Taiwan, there is an unmistakable trend for people to take continuing education on night time or holidays. Nonetheless, the total numbers of university are approximate 160, resulting in the pressure of competing. This study selected six universities as the objects, a total of 400 questionnaires were distributed, and 352 usable samples were collected. This research findings higher learning motivation as well as the better school learning environment are the mainly effective factors to increase people intention on school study selection. However, the school with higher requirements of participating continuing education will bring higher learning emotional labor and reduce selection intention; In addition, the research results also indicate that learning emotional labor has moderating effect between learning motivation, school environment and the intention of taking continuing education.

Keywords: learning motivation, learning emotional labor, selection intention, continuing education

1. Introduction

Participating in in-service training education is a part of teachers' professional development process (Ferrel & Daniel, 1993; Newman, 1998). As the trend of lifelong learning in the world, Taiwan's Ministry of Education set the 1998 year as the “Lifelong Learning Year”. In 2002, Taiwan Government legislated the "Lifelong Learning Act" and followed up the “Senior High School to Kindergarten Teachers Further Education Regulations”, “Teachers Continuing Studies Incentives Regulations” to proclaim teachers' rights and obligations in order to enhance the teachers' professional knowledge. There are approximate 160 universities in Taiwan, the on-job people who wants to take continuing education may have many selections. For attracting the in-service students to participate in recurrent education, the universities establish the Unit called “Center of Continuing Education” and apply a variety of courses to marketing themselves. From the statistic data of Teacher Continuing Education Network shows that more than 60% of the teachers are willing to participate in EMBA Programs. Knowledge shows that there will be a reason why the human being take such a action or activity (Houle, 1961), and reveals that both the extrinsic and

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intrinsic motivations will drive teachers to participate in advanced training education (Okun, 1979). Therefore, what kinds of motivation would influence the study intention of university selection is one of the investigating issues.

For in-service students, they have to take night time or holiday to participate in continuing education. Thus, the factors of school reputation and learning environment may also influence the study intention of university selection. So, which are the crucial environmental factors are another investigating issues of the present study.

In order to maintain the learning quality, some universities set the learning course pass rate. As we know, the failure rate per each course in American universities is about 30% to ensure the learning quality of students. In Taiwan, National Chiao Tung University and Da-Yeh University were used to implement the 15% failure rate for compulsory subjects, but it caused students strongly objectionable and led to a transfer school phenomenon. Like this kind learning stimulus whether makes the students create emotional labor in the learning stage is the third investigating issue. Furthermore, the emotional labor whether moderates the studying intention is the fourth exploring issue of this study.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Learning Motivation

Motivation can be used to explain the causes and reasons why the teachers participate in in-service education (Chin Meng-chun, 1999). Human behavior motivation is not only purely psychological or physiological reaction, as well as external pressures, incentives, environmental impact, etc. Teachers participate in in-service training education is based on the principle of their free willingness. Therefore, there should be some more strong re-learning motivation to drive the teachers to participate in EMBA programs. So, it indicates that the person is willing to participate in continuing education, that means the individual does have certain requirements for it (Miller, 1967).

Boshier (1973) identifies there are two kinds of motivations for adult education participants, one is a deficiency-motivated person and the other is a growth-motivated person. Deficiency-motivated people are often directed by social and environmental pressures. In order to satisfy others’ requirements, expectations, or to achieve a particular purpose, they participate in the learning courses. They are more afraid of the environment and often determine their future by being more reactive to the environment. However, growth-motivated people are inner directed, autonomous, open to new experiences, can be spontaneous and creative, and are active in creating the future.

Houle (1961) is the first one to propose the learning motivation prototype. He suggests that there are three types of learners: goal-oriented, activity-oriented, and learning-oriented. Houle’s findings have far-reaching influence on future educational research. Based on Houle’s research, Sheffield (1964) developed five motivational orientations, consisted of: learning, personal-goal, social-goal, desire-activity and need-activity orientation. Burgess (1971) extracted seven desires of education participation, such as: the desire to know, to reach a personal goal, to achieve a social goal, to reach a religious goal, to take part in activity, to escape, to comply with others requirements. Boshier (1978) regarded that the Sheffield’s study samples are highly homogeneous, and did not calculate the correlation between the factors and the re-test reliability of the test items in order to avoid the bias of reactive and social desirability. He identified six motivational orientations, such as: social contact, social stimulation, professional advancement, social welfare, external expectation and cognitive interest, using factor analysis. According to the above theories of scholars, this study uses the teachers who participate in in-service training education as the research subjects to explore which are the most important motivational orientations, using factor analysis to extract and verify the study results.

2.2. Consumer selection behavior

The decision-making of school selection behavior is a series of mental activities process, containing: need cognition, solution search, evaluation and selecting of alternatives, and post-evaluation of the decision. This process is similar to consumer decision-making model. Kotler (1994) indicates that the consumer decision process consists
of five stages: problem confirmation, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior. So, consumer selection behavior process is started when an individual confirms his need and passes through all five stages, and finally evaluates the difference selective subjects by his subjective perception option. In Taiwan, there are a lot of in-service training learners prefer the university far-away from their workplaces or residences, and do not select the university located nearby to them. Because these universities provide the various favorable courses and beneficial learning environments for them. So, to create excellent learning environmental conditions will affect the student studying intention of school selection. This study adopts the face-to-face interview with EMBA participator and collates the data from the questionnaires, finding there are five variables may affect students studying intention, they are: attend class convenience, teachers, curriculum, school reputation and admission convenience. This research will further use quantitative method to explore the influence of the five variables on the student studying intention.

2.3. Emotional labor

Emotion is the consciousness of people experience, explanation, reaction, expression and management (Thoits, 1989). We believe that there is an implicit model of emotion process, according to which emotions created by appraisals of events is in relation to motives or preferences. The various patterns of appraisal, then, elicit one or more sets of basic-level emotional responses, each including expressions, action tendencies, subjective feelings, and associated physiological states (Shaver etc., 1987). Emotion is often regarded as a non-functioning, non-rational, and can interfere with work (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993, 1995). Emotional labor is the result of emotion commercialization (Hochschild, 1983), in other words, emotions have the exchange value and can be sold in exchange for wages. Emotional labor is regarded as part of the job when working people are required to express their emotions. So, when students are given the specific learning regulations, such as: the failure rate for compulsory subjects or graduation GEPT scores threshold will induce students emotional pressure of learning. Therefore, Emotional labor will have a moderating effect on studying intention of school selection.

3. Method

3.1. Research Hyptheses

Based on literature reviewed, the following research hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Learning regulations will have a positive influence on emotional labor.
H2: Learning motivation will have a positive influence on studying intention of school selection.
H3: School environmental conditions will have a positive influence on studying intention of school selection.
H4: Emotional labors will have a significant moderating effect between learning motivation and studying intention of school selection.
H5: Emotional labors will have a significant moderating effect between school environmental conditions and studying intention of school selection.

3.2. Measure of the Constructs

This research adopted an exploratory style. At first, there were five most important factors elected through the face-to-face interview survey to each in-service training participator, and found the five most important motivation factors were: influence of others, professional advancement, social relation, and escape / stimulation etc. School environmental conditions are: attend class convenience, teachers and curriculum, school reputation, and admission convenience etc. The structured questionnaire was developed by reviewing the related studies of other researchers and with advice from two Professors. The questionnaire was divided into two dimensions, namely participation motivation with a total of 27 items and school environmental conditions with a total of 14 items. In order to show the impression expectation of others, in-service learners are often hidden and adjusted their real feelings in the learning process. Therefore, this study adopts Diefendorff, Croyle, and Grosserand (2005) theory, dividing emotional labor into surface acting, deep acting and expression of naturally felt emotions three parts with a total of
14 items. Based on the Studying Intention of School Selection Scale devised by Zeithaml (1988) and Dodds, Monroe and Grewal (1991), a Scale with five items was developed. All items of the questionnaire are used the Likert five-point scale to measure. Learning regulations are measured by the dichotomy scoring method with the aggregate data from all interview subjects.

3.3. Pretest

The universities of central Taiwan are targeted as the study subject, and randomly select EMBA participators from high-ranking, middle-ranking, and low-ranking schools for pre-test. A total of 160 questionnaires were distributed, and 156 valid samples were collected. Total correlation coefficients of each modified item are more than 0.3, which means all the items have good validity. Then the exploratory factor analysis is used to verify the factor of each dimension. The first time, factor analysis was conducted with participation motivation items, using principal component analysis and Varimax method to conduct rotary axes to get the Eigenvalue, and extracting the factor which Eigenvalue is greater than 1, then deleting 5 question items which factor loading value is less than 0.5. Thus, the second time factor analysis was conducted and 1 item was deleted, and the third time extracted four factors from the items. For participation motivation, KMO = .716 (p <.05), the total cumulative explained variance was 68.63%, and Cronbach 'α' = .858. There were four factors extracted from school environmental conditions, KMO = .863 (p <.05), the total cumulative explained variance was 80.60%, and Cronbach 'α' = .863. Emotional labor was analyzed with the factor analysis to extract four factors, KMO = .826 (p <.05), the total cumulative explained variance of 68.22%, and Cronbach 'α' = .762. Studying intention of school selection was extracted one factor, KMO = .914 (p <.05), the total cumulative explained variance was 74.40%, and Cronbach 'α' = .914.

3.4. Analysis

A total of 400 official questionnaires were distributed to EMBA participators studying in the randomly selected schools of high-ranking, middle-ranking, and low-ranking universities, and all were collected. After questionnaires with incomplete and invalid answers were eliminated, there were 352 valid samples. The sample demographics are shown in Table 1.

| Variable          | Percent (%) | Variable          | Percent (%) |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Gender            |             | Martial status    |             |
| Male              | 37.5        | Unmarried         | 22.4        |
| Female            | 62.5        | Married           | 77.6        |
| Age               |             | Working years     |             |
| Less than 30      | 8.3         | Less than 5       | 3.5         |
| 31-40             | 50.4        | 6-15              | 57.8        |
| 41-50             | 38.6        | 16-25             | 35.4        |
| 51 or older       | 2.7         | More than 26      | 3.2         |

The simple linear regression analysis is used to verify the hypothesis 1 to 3. The test result indicated that standardized regression coefficient $\beta$ of learning regulations to emotional labor is 0.121 (p <0.05), that means learning regulations have a significant positive influence on emotional labor. The hypothesis 1 of this study is supported. $\beta$ of learning motivation to studying intention of school selection is 0.261 (p <0.05), the hypothesis 2 that learning motivation will have a positive influence on studying intention of school selection is supported. Additionally, $\beta$ of school environmental conditions to studying intention of school selection is 0.520 (p <0.05), that indicates school environmental conditions will have a positive influence on studying intention of school, therefore, the hypothesis 3 is also supported. The Hierarchical Regression Analysis is used to test emotional labor to learning motivation and studying intention of school selection is presented in Table 2.
Table 2. Emotional labor has a moderating effect between learning motivation and studying intention of school selection

| Variable                          | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 | Model 7 | Model 8 | Model 9 | Model 10 |
|----------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| Emotional labor                  | -.077   | -.069   | -.083   | -.101   | -.073   | -.097   | -.104   | .035    | -.060   | -.063    |
| Interest & achievement           | .064    | .063    | .035    | .035    | .135    | .130    | -.069   | -.044   |          |          |
| Influence of others              | .135    | .130    | .135    | .130    |         |         |         |         |          |          |
| Professional advancement         | -.165   | -.148   | -.145   | -.148   | -.148   | -.148   | -.148   | -.148   | -.148   | -.148   |
| Social relation                  | .135    | .130    | .135    | .130    |         |         |         |         |          |          |
| Escape/stimulation               | -.069   | -.044   | -.069   | -.044   | -.069   | -.044   | -.069   | -.044   | -.069   | -.044   |
| Emotional labor * interest & achievement | .116   |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |
| Emotional labor * influence of others | .086   |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |
| Emotional labor * professional advancement | .202   |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |
| Emotional labor * social relation | -.140   |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |
| Emotional labor * escape/stimulation | -.113   |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |

R²   .010  .023  .014  .027  .064  .023  .024  .010  .022
ΔR²  .010  .003  .007  .007  .027  .037  .023  .001  .010  .012

Notes:  ‘p<0.05 , ′′ p<0.01 , ′′′ p<0.001

Seen from Table 2, the emotional labor will have a significant moderating influence on interest and achievement, Professional advancement, social relation and studying intention of school selection. The Hierarchical Regression Analysis of emotional labor to school environmental conditions and studying intention of school selection is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Emotional labor has a moderating effect between school environmental conditions and studying intention of school selection

| Variable                          | Model 11  | Model 12  | Model 13  | Model 14  | Model 15  | Model 16  | Model 17  | Model 18  |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Emotional labor                  | -.082    | -.083    | -.079    | -.079    | .046      | .045      | .063      | .062      |
| Attend class convenience         | .046      | .045      | .063      | .062      | .027      | .054      | .037      | .010      |
| Teachers & curriculum            | .063      | .062      | .027      | .054      | .037      | .010      | .003      | .014      |
| School reputation                | -.003     | -.014     | .003      | .014      | -.136     |          |          | .244      |
| Admission convenience            | -.244     |          | .244      |          | .003      |          |          | .003      |

R²   .008  .008  .010  .010  .006  .024  .007  .064
ΔR²  .008  .000  .010  .000  .006  .018  .007  .057

Notes:  ‘p<0.05 , ′′ p<0.01 , ′′′ p<0.001
Table 3 shows that emotional labor will have a significant moderating influence on school reputation, Admission convenience and studying intention of school selection.

4. Conclusion

In Taiwan Area, there are more than 160 universities is the highest density compared with other countries in the world. For attracting in-service students to participate in EMBA programs, the school official relevant admission requirements must be simplified as well as to create a conducive learning environment for study in order to avoid emotional labor. For in-service students, the key factor of studying intention of school selection is to be beneficial to their learning. Therefore, there should be some conducive motivation factors created by the Government or employers to promote in-service education to make sure the Recurrent Education can be sustained and perpetual development.

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