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Helping to promote psychological well-being at work: The role of work engagement, work stress and psychological detachment using the job demands-resources model

White, E.

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The Plymouth Student Scientist
University of Plymouth

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Appendix A

FAO: Emma White Student no. 10143876
Faculty of Science and Technology
University of Plymouth
Drake Circus
Plymouth
PL4 8AA
Email: emma.white2@students.plymouth.ac.uk

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH PROJECT ON WORK- ENGAGEMENT AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

As you may or may not know, I am currently employed as a relief support worker by The Wessex Autistic Society (TWAS). I am also a final year student studying Psychology at The University of Plymouth and am asking for your help with my final year project.

As you are aware, working with children and adults on the autistic spectrum is an emotionally demanding role. The study will focus on employees who have to deal with emotionally demanding situations, and the affect of these demands on psychological health and well-being.

Please know that all individual responses will remain completely anonymous – your name is not required. Only my supervisor and myself, will have access to the information provided. This gives you the freedom to answer all questions as openly and honestly as possible. TWAS will receive a copy of the completed report, which you should be able to access. The report will not identify individual responses from the questionnaires.

Enclosed in this pack is a brief, a questionnaire and a debrief. Please read the brief, which will provide you with an overview of what to expect when taking part in the study. If you are happy to continue after reading the brief, complete the questionnaire. When completed, put the questionnaire into the envelope provided and seal it. Sealing the envelope will ensure your results remain anonymous. Finally, read the debrief for further information regarding the study and your data.

Thank you for taking the time to help me with my final year project. Your help is very much appreciated.

Kind regards,

Emma White

Appendix B

Brief

Community support workers play a vital role in society helping to improve the lives of the disabled adults and children they work with. Such a role can be very rewarding however; this work is emotionally demanding and potentially stressful at times. This study will examine the way you perceive your role and how this impacts on your psychological well-being both at work and at home.

You have been provided with a short questionnaire, which will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. You must be aged 18 or over and participation is voluntary. Your data will remain completely anonymous and confidential so please answer all questions openly and honestly.

If you are happy to continue, please complete the questionnaire and put it in the freepost envelope provided. If you do not want to take part in the study, please return the questionnaire in the freepost envelope provided. All questionnaires will be returned directly back to the experimenter. If you have any questions about completing the study, please email emma.white2@students.plymouth.ac.uk.

Thank you in advance for your time.

Appendix C

Participant no. 1

Debrief

Thank you for completing the questionnaire. This study will examine the way you perceive your work role and the impact of these perceptions on your psychological well-being. This study is specifically concerned with work-engagement (a positive work-related state of mind) and its impact on psychological well-being. It is thought decreased work-engagement in periods of "time off" enables psychological recovery, which in turn improves work engagement at work and subsequent psychological well-being.

Your data will remain completely confidential and anonymous. However, you have the right to withdraw your data at any time. Should you wish to withdraw your data, please send an e-mail to the address below with your participation number (top right of Debrief) and "withdraw my data" in the subject box. No explanation will be required.

If you feel you suffer with stress and poor psychological well-being in your daily life, there are many online resources available to support you. These include health and safety websites on stress at work. Also, you can talk to your line manager or GP who can offer you continued help and support.

If you have any questions or comments, please e-mail them to the address below. emma.white2@students.plymouth.ac.uk.

Again, thank you for completing this questionnaire. Your time is appreciated.

Appendix D

Study questionnaire: available in hard copy only.

Appendix E

Ethics: Form available in hard copy only.

Appendix F

FAO: Emma White Student no. 10143876
Faculty of Science and Technology
University of Plymouth
Drake Circus
Plymouth
PL4 8AA
Email: emma.white2@students.plymouth.ac.uk

The Wessex Autistic Society
Head Office
Bargates Court
22 Bargates
Christchurch
Dorset
BH23 1GL

18th October 2010

Dear Rachael,

RE: DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

I am currently in my final year at The University of Plymouth studying BSc Psychology. For my dissertation I plan to examine the effects of work-engagement and work-detachment on the psychological well-being of employees in an emotionally demanding role.

Work-engagement refers to a positive and fulfilling work-related state of mind. Work detachment refers to the individual ability to “switch off” in out of work time. The proposed study will examine the relationship between how well employees can detach themselves from work at the end of the day and whether this detachment has a positive impact on how well employees cope throughout the working day. Additionally, the study will look at how satisfied employees are with their work role and the impact of this satisfaction on work-engagement.

Research has shown that employees who are actively engaged and perceive their work role in a positive manner demonstrate increased work performance, decreased sickness and provide an enhanced level of customer service to clients. Furthermore,

employees high in work-engagement show higher levels of innovation (vital to organisations in this economic climate) focused on how a service can continue to grow and improve. The aforementioned benefits demonstrate the importance of work-engagement to organisations with a strong client-focus such as The Wessex Autistic Society.

With this in mind, I would like to make a proposal to examine the levels of work-engagement, work-detachment and their impact on the psychological well-being of employees within The Wessex Autistic Society. In particular, the project will be concerned with individuals in emotionally demanding roles i.e. community support workers, support works, team leaders, teachers and teaching assistants.

With your consent, approximately 200 study packs will be distributed to Human Resources at Head Office where they will be either posted to home addresses or handed out at Head Office. This will ensure confidentiality as personal details will not be required. The study pack will contain a letter of introduction, a brief informing employees about the study, a questionnaire, which will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete, a debrief informing about personal rights regarding data and finally a freepost envelope, which will be addressed directly to the experimenter via the School of Psychology at The University of Plymouth. A study pack will be available for you to view before they are administered to employees.

All employees who complete the questionnaire will remain completely anonymous so it will not be possible to track individual answers to a single employee. This will increase the chance that employees answer all questions as openly and honestly as possible to provide you with the clearest picture.

On completion, The Wessex Autistic Society will receive a copy of my report, which will include a literature review regarding the importance of the concepts of interest, a detailed method and results section and finally a discussion of the results and any patterns the data may show. This will be massively beneficial to The Wessex Autistic Society. It is possible that on reading the report, the organisation may decide to take further action utilising the work of qualified Occupational Psychologists.

If you are happy with the study aims and give your full consent for this research to take place, please send a letter of consent to the above address. If however, you feel you require further information to make a decision, please do not hesitate to ask.

Thank you and kind regards,

Emma White

Appendix G

Written consent from the organisation confirming their participation in the study:
available in hard copy only.

Appendix H

Disks submitted with hard copy:

1. EXCEL data
2. SPSS data input
3. SPSS data output