



The effect of high-performance work systems on employee well-being: moderate role of union practice

Wei Qi¹, Sun Jiandong²

¹School of economics and management, Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Nanjing 211106, China;

weiqi19950102@gmail.com

²Guilin University of Aerospace Technology, Guilin Guangxi 541004, China; 82882556@qq.com

Abstract

Improving employee well-being is not only a social responsibility that an enterprise should fulfill, but also an important means to improve its own competitiveness. Based on the theory of social information processing, this paper takes 256 employees in Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Shanghai as samples, and finds that high-performance work systems have a significant positive impact on employees' psychological well-being, and have a significant negative impact on employees' physical well-being. To influence. In addition, the paper finds that union practice can significantly enhance the positive impact of high-performance work systems on employee psychological well-being. This provides new guidance for improving employee happiness through sound management practices.

Keywords: Well-being; high-performance work system; Union practice.

1. Introduction

Improving employees' well-being in the workplace is not only one of the social responsibilities that companies must assume, but also an important means for companies to gain a competitive advantage (Jianan, Mingyan, & Jing, 2018) (Chen Jianan and Chen Mingyan, etc., 2018). Employee well-being can not only reduce employee turnover tendency and increase employee performance, but also have an important impact on employee creativity (Miao & Cao, 2019; Page & Vella-Brodrick, 2009; Robertson, Jansen Birch, & Cooper, 2012) (Miao and Cao, 2019; Page and Vella-Brodrick, 2009; Robertson and Jansen Birch et al., 2012).

Earlier research on happiness mainly explored the impact of individual factors or job characteristics on well-being (Van De Voorde, Paauwe, & Van Veldhoven, 2012). With the gradual improvement of the status of human resources management practices in business management, researchers have gradually paid attention to the relationship between human resources systems, especially high-performance work systems known as "best human resources management practices" and employee happiness related variables (Cao, Xi, & Zhao, 2019). However, the focus of these studies is on the relationship between high-performance work systems and performance. Usually, the relevant variables of employee happiness are used as intermediate variables (Guest, 2017), and more attention is paid to the positive impact of high-performance work systems on employee well-being. For example, it improves employees' affective commitment and job satisfaction. Therefore, it is considered that a high-performance work system can improve corporate performance and employee well-being at the same time, which is a "win-win" management model (Mingqiong Zhang, Zhu, Dowling, & Bartram, 2013). While other researchers are skeptical of this view, Appelbaum, Bailey, Berg, Kalleberg, and Bailey (2000) pointed out that although high-performance work

systems improve employees' positive experiences such as affective commitment, from the end result, such employees are The increase in experience benefits the business more than the employees. Godard (2001) believes that high-performance work systems always serve the enterprise, and employee participation and work autonomy emphasized by high-performance work systems are essentially a strategic authorization. The ultimate purpose of such authorization is to accompany power. Responsibilities place higher demands on employees, so they will eventually lead to negative experiences such as anxiety or emotional exhaustion, reducing employee well-being. On this basis, Van De Voorde and Beijer (2015) integrated the existing viewpoints from the perspective of social information and pointed out that on the one hand, high-performance work systems transmitted to employees the information that the organization values employees and increased the number of employees. On the other hand, the high-performance work system always serves corporate performance, and during the implementation process, it will pass higher work requirements to employees, causing negative experiences such as tension and anxiety. In response to this view, Guest (2017) further pointed out that the impact of high-performance work systems on employee well-being depends more on external environmental factors.

Existing research suggests that whether high-performance work systems have a negative impact on employee well-being during implementation depends on whether employees can perceive effective social support in the workplace (Böckerman, Bryson, Ilmakunnas, & Organization, 2012). As a defender of employee rights, the union has always been an important source of social support for workplace employees (Goeddeke Jr & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2010). Related research also shows that social support provided by unions can effectively alleviate the impact of corporate human resource management on employees' negative feelings (Bryson, Barth, & Dale-Olsen, 2013). In addition, the Chinese trade unions not only provide employees with the necessary social support as employees' rights defenders, but also act as corporate managers to enhance the effectiveness of human resource management practices through their own practices (Wang & Zheng, 2012). For example, Chen and Kim (2018) Chen, Kim, Liu, Wang, and Zhao (2018) found that compared with companies with poor union work, in companies with better union work, there is a stronger relationship between high-performance work systems and positive psychological states such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

In view of this, on the basis of existing research, this paper combines social information processing theory to verify the relationship between high-performance work systems and employee well-being, and introduces union practice as a moderator. Moderating role of the relationship between well-being.

2. literature review and hypothesis

2.1 Definition of well-being

In a broad sense, employee well-being refers to the employee's overall evaluation of work and life (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). However, in the current research on employee well-being, researchers tend to define employee well-being as all subjective experiences and states of employees in the workplace (Grant, Christianson, & Price, 2007). According to this definition, employee well-being has two important dimensions. The first dimension focuses on reflecting the subjective emotional experience of employees in the company. It is often referred to as "psychological well-being." This dimension is also an early reflection of employee well-being. main indicators. When measuring this dimension, researchers usually use job satisfaction and affective commitment. Job satisfaction focuses on the employees' psychological feelings and status when facing work, and refers to a positive emotional state generated by employees due to a higher evaluation of their own work or a good experience at work (Locke, 1983). Affective commitment refers to the positive emotional connection between employees and the organization, and pay more attention to the overall psychological feelings of employees in the organization. The most commonly used affective commitment scales, including "I'm happy to spend the rest of my career with this company", "I feel like I'm not part of an extended family (reverse)", are able to Reflect the positive psychological feelings of employees in the organization (Fisher, 2010)

With the in-depth exploration of the connotation of well-being, the dimension of well-being has begun to be gradually expanded. Danna and Griffin (1999) pointed out that the employee's sense of well-being should be a broader concept, which should not only include the emotional or psychological experience of employees, but also

include the employee's healthy state in the enterprise as part of employee well-being. This state is usually reflected by some physiological indicators or some subjective judgments about one's own state, including fatigue, injury, etc., but in management research, it is mostly based on variables such as work vitality, job burnout, work anxiety, and emotional exhaustion (Peccei et al., 2013). At the same time, because this series of variables are usually closely related to the physical health of employees, such as employee anxiety, emotional exhaustion and other bad experiences may cause blood pressure to rise, or some cardiovascular diseases, this dimension is often called Physiological well-being (Van De Voorde et al., 2012).

Therefore, when investigating high-performance work systems and employee well-being, most studies have selected psychological well-being and physical well-being as the focus of research, in order to more intuitively and universally reflect the impact of high-performance work systems on employee well-being (Ho, 2018). Referring to previous studies, the thesis also takes psychological well-being and physical well-being as research objects, and selects job satisfaction and affective commitment to measure employees' psychological well-being and select work anxiety and emotional exhaustion to measure the physiological dimensions of well-being.

2.2 The effect of HPWS on psychological well-being

The high-performance work system refers to a collection of management practices aimed at improving corporate performance. Although the existing research does not reach a consensus on the specific practice content of high-performance work, it generally includes recruitment and Selection, performance compensation, employee participation, etc. (Z. Zhang & Li, 2015). Compared with the traditional controlled human resource management system, the high-performance work system emphasizes the empowerment and participation of employees to improve employee performance. Therefore, in the process of implementation, high-performance work systems can pass on the company's message of respect, attention, and concern to employees (CHUANG & Liao, 2010). For example, (Kuvaas, 2008) believes that employee participation, training, and internal promotion in high-performance work systems can help employees better identify and use development opportunities in the enterprise, which makes employees feel that their development and potential are received Companies value it. (Macky & Boxall, 2008) also pointed out that the practice of employee participation included in the high-performance work system reflects the company's concept of treating employees as partners rather than simply employees, and can convey to employees the message that the company respects and recognizes employees. In addition, Vo and Bartram (2012) believe that high-performance work systems can reflect the company's long-term investment in employees, making employees feel that companies not only value their own interests, but also value their development and contributions. When employees receive positive messages including respect, attention, and concern from high-performance work systems, employees tend to treat their existing work as a career and are more willing to establish a higher emotional relationship with the company, Resulting in higher job satisfaction and affective commitment (Guest, 2017). Therefore, the paper makes the following hypothesis:

H1a: High-performance work systems have a significant positive impact on employee job satisfaction.

H1b: High-performance work systems have a significant positive impact on employee affective commitment.

2.3 The effect of HPWS on psychological well-being

Although the high-performance work system transmitted positive information to employees through reasonable arrangements, giving employees autonomy, etc., at the same time, the high-performance work system also transmitted high-demand information to employees, increasing the work intensity and pressure of employees, which in turn causes anxiety and emotional exhaustion of employees (Jensen, Patel, & Messersmith, 2013) (Jensen and Patel et al., 2013). For example, J. SUN and WANG (2016) pointed out that high-performance work systems link employees' salaries and promotions to their performance, inevitably raising standards and norms for employees, and transmitting high requirements and competition to employees. Information, in order to cope with the high requirements and high competition brought about by high-performance work systems, employees not only need to objectively improve their work efficiency and working hours, but also need employees to invest more energy in their work. Ramsay, Scholarios, and Harley (2000) pointed out that, compared with traditional human resource management, high performance emphasizes giving employees more participation and autonomy at work, which brings freedom of work and also requires the need for autonomous decision-making. Responsibilities, this

incidental work responsibility will bring more work pressure. At the same time, Chaudhuri (2009) believes that high-performance work systems do not emphasize setting quantitative or clear goals for work, which will make employees feel higher job uncertainty and job requirements. When employees perceive high job requirements, employees often fall into the dilemma of being faced with the negative consequences of not being able to meet the high requirements, but unable to handle the high requirements through their own capabilities. This dilemma will further cause Employees' work anxiety and emotional exhaustion (Seligman & Garber, 1980). Therefore, the paper makes the following assumptions:

H2a: High-performance work systems have a significant positive impact on work anxiety.

H2b: High-performance work systems have a significant positive impact on emotional exhaustion.

2.4 The moderate role of union practice

China's trade unions usually appear in the form of enterprise departments in enterprises, so some of the trade union's practical activities will also convey the message that companies respect and value employees. First of all, the labor union has held employee congresses and established employee committees to protect employees' participation in corporate affairs and increase employees' sense of participation in the enterprise (Zhan & Zhao, 2017). Secondly, the trade unions also improve employees' professional skills and cultural literacy by holding various trainings and skill competitions, which ensure the employees' career development and make employees feel that their development is valued (Maolong Zhang, Hu, & Zhang, 2018). Finally, unions will give benefits to employees on holidays, and at the same time, humane care will be given to employees who have difficulties in living or have experienced family changes (Qu & Zhao, 2017). These activities will send a specific message to employees, that is, employees not only exist as production tools in the enterprise, but their health and development are valued (Hu, Han, Shan, Zhang, & Wei, 2019).

According to the theory of social information processing, when employees receive similar information, they will become more sensitive to the same type of information, that is, they will more easily accept the same type of information (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). When the union is doing a good job, employees can receive positive messages such as respect for employees and attention to employee development. This information can help strengthen employees' perception of the positive information transmitted by high-performance work systems, thereby enhancing the positive relationship between high-performance work systems and employees' job satisfaction and affective commitment. However, when the union's work is insufficient, employees receive less positive messages from the union, and it is difficult to effectively enhance employees' perception of the positive messages transmitted by the high-performance work system. The relationship between affective commitments is weak. Therefore, the paper makes the following assumptions:

H3a: Trade union practice can positively regulate the positive relationship between high-performance work systems and job satisfaction, that is, when union practice is better, the positive relationship between high-performance work systems and job satisfaction is stronger, and when union practices are poor, the positive relationship between high-performance work systems and job satisfaction is weak.

H3b: Trade union practice can positively regulate the positive relationship between high-performance work systems and affective commitment, that is, when union practice is better, the positive relationship between high-performance work systems and affective commitment is stronger, and when union practice is worse, the positive relationship between high-performance work systems and affective commitment is weak.

Effective social support can provide employees with an additional way to solve the difficulties caused by high work requirements. When employees feel that they can obtain effective social support, they will reduce the evaluation of the negative consequences of failing to meet high work requirements, thereby reducing high costs. The relationship between job requirements and negative feelings (Cohen & Wills, 1985). As a defender of employee rights, unions have always been an important source of social support for employees in enterprises (Bryson et al., 2013). First, the union can sign collective labor contracts on behalf of employees and enterprises, which protects the employees' employment period, working hours, and wage levels (Wei, Dong, & Jing, 2015). Second, when the rights and interests of employees are violated, the union can make reasonable suggestions to employees on behalf of

employees to protect their rights and interests from being harmed (Z. Sun & He, 2012). Finally, the trade unions set up communication channels for employees and enterprises by convening employee congresses and establishing advisory committees to help employees and enterprises communicate with each other and pass on their reasonable demands (Zhan & Zhao, 2017). When employees feel that the union can protect their rights and interests, employees will reduce the negative consequences of their inability to complete demanding work. Therefore, when union practices are good, even if employees perceive the high work requirements brought about by high-performance work systems, they will still not have much anxiety and emotional exhaustion. When union practices are inadequate, when employees perceive the high requirements brought about by high-performance work systems, they will have a higher level of anxiety or emotional exhaustion because they perceive that there is no effective way to solve the problem. Therefore, the paper makes the following assumptions:

H4a: Trade union practice can negatively regulate the positive relationship between high-performance work systems and work anxiety, that is, when union practice is better, the positive relationship between high-performance work systems and work anxiety is weak, and when union practice is worse, the positive relationship between high-performance work systems and work anxiety is stronger.

H4b: Trade union practice can negatively regulate the positive relationship between high-performance work systems and emotional exhaustion, that is, when union practice is better, the positive relationship between high-performance work systems and emotional exhaustion is weak, and when it is worse, there is a stronger positive relationship between high-performance work systems and emotional exhaustion.

3. Data and analysis

3.1 Sample

In this survey, 256 employees from different operating companies in Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Shanghai, Beijing and other places were taken as the research object. In order to ensure the quality of the questionnaire information received, the author first screened and sorted out 25 different types of unionized companies as data sources; after that, he contacted the contacts of various companies by email, phone, WeChat, etc. and informed this time. The purpose of the study was to fill out the precautions for the questionnaire and ensure the confidentiality of the data to the client. Finally, the company's contact person was commissioned to help with the issuance, interpretation, and recovery of the questionnaire, and to keep it with the client at any time during the questionnaire. Contact to ensure that problems encountered during the filling process can be resolved in a timely manner. A total of 280 questionnaires were distributed in this survey, 256 questionnaires were recovered, and the recovery rate was 91.4. After the invalid questionnaires were eliminated (including the questionnaires with multiple filling options, missing too many items, and all the same options checked), the questionnaires were finally recovered 234 copies. Among them, 50.4% are men and 49.6% are women. 11.5% of them have a high school / secondary degree or below, 30.3% have a college degree, 48.3% have a bachelor degree, and 9.8% have a graduate degree or above. From the perspective of corporate positions, high-level leaders accounted for 12.8%, middle-level leaders accounted for 16.7%, grass-roots leaders accounted for 22%, and ordinary employees who did not hold any position accounted for 61.1%. In terms of trade union positions, 6.8% are union leaders, 10.7% are union workers, 36.8% are union members, and 45.7% are non-union employees. Generally speaking, the samples have diverse characteristics and have certain representativeness, which can meet the requirements of this study.

3.2 Correlations between variables

The correlation matrix of each variable in the paper is shown in Table 1. As can be seen from Table 1, high-performance work systems are positively correlated with organizational support ($r = 0.0709$, $p < 0.01$), H1 has been initially verified, and organizational support is positively correlated with well-being ($r = 0.765$, $p < 0.01$), H2 was preliminary verified; high-performance work system was significantly positively correlated with work stress ($r = 0.214$, $p < 0.01$), H3 was preliminary verified; work stress was significantly negatively correlated with well-being ($r = -0.194$, $p < 0.01$). In addition, according to Tsui et al. (1995), if there is a problem of multicollinearity, the critical level of the correlation level will generally exceed 0.75. As shown in Table 1 there is no serious multicollinearity problem in the paper data.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1.sex	1													
2.age	-.105	1												
3.edu	-.056	-.362**	1											
4.pol	-.121	.230**	-.318**	1										
5.typ	.071	.274**	-.382**	.308**	1									
6.siz	-.185**	-.490**	.285**	-.231**	-.368**	1								
7.Com post	.091	-.482**	.085	-.166*	-.289**	.488**	1							
8.union post	-.052	-.131*	-.121	.130*	.019	.059	.344**	1						
9.HPWS	.133*	.155*	-.251**	.069	.061	-.254**	-.172**	-.073	1					
10.UP	.129	.108	-.149*	-.021	-.101	-.097	-.044	-.066	.712**	1				
11.WA	.137*	-.003	-.140*	.016	-.033	-.025	.146*	.096	.245**	.306**	1			
12.EE	.005	.009	-.044	.079	-.073	.061	-.002	-.048	-.045	-.029	.414**	1		
13JS	.087	.230**	-.181**	.069	.144*	-.321**	-.187**	-.026	.502**	.385**	-.078	-.421**	1	
14.AC	.086	.183**	-.209**	.027	.099	-.225**	-.146*	-.004	.671**	.576**	.130*	-.067	.670**	1

3.3 Regression results

We take affective commitment as the dependent variable, introduces control variables and high-performance work systems as independent variables, and builds model 1 and model 2, and then introduces union practices and interaction terms to build model 3. From the regression results, it can be seen that the high-performance work system has a significant positive impact on affective commitment ($\beta = 0.804, p = 0.000$). From the interaction term, it can be seen that the union practice can significantly regulate the positive relationship between the high-performance work system and affective commitment. Relationship ($\beta = 0.224, p = 0.001$). Then using job satisfaction as the outcome variable and repeating the above steps, it can be seen from the results that the high-performance work system has a significant positive impact on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.583, p = 0.000$), and the union practice can significantly adjust the high-performance work system Positive relationship with affective commitment ($\beta = 0.157, p = 0.043$).

Table 2 Regression Results of the Relationship Between HPWS, Psychological Well-being and Union practice

	Affective commitment			Job satisfaction		
	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6
constants						
sex	.113	-.006	-.037	.092	.012	.002
age	.030	.072	.031	.069	.097	.080
edu	-.239	-.004	-.017	-.124	.033	.025
pol	-.069	-.052	-.050	-.029	-.018	-.017
typ	-.042	.080	.112	.010	.091	.093
siz	-.118	-.024	-.001	-.192*	-.130	-.104
Com post	-.085	-.007	-.053	-.050	.002	-.024
union post	.030	.067	.056	.017	.042	.034
HPWS		.804***	.654***		.538***	.534***
UP			.163			.010
HPWS×UP			.224**			.157*

In order to better reflect the role of the union in regulating the relationship between high-performance work systems and psychological well-being, we use a simple slope analysis method to plot the results, and the results are shown in the following figure:

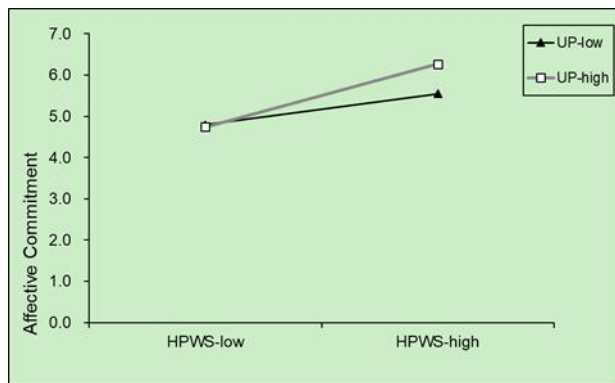


Figure 1

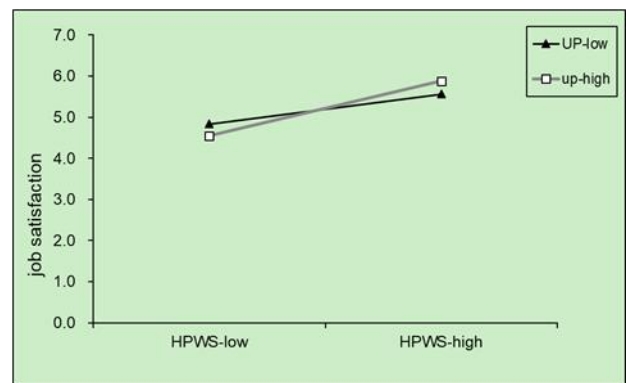


Figure 2

Then we takes work anxiety as the dependent variable, introduces control variables and high-performance work systems as independent variables, and builds model 1 and model 2, and then introduces union practice and interaction terms to build model 3. From the regression results, it can be seen that the high-performance work system has a significant positive impact on affective commitment ($\beta = 0.396, p = 0.000$). From the interaction term, it can be seen that union practice cannot significantly regulate the positive relationship between high-performance work systems and work anxiety Direction relationship ($\beta = 0.031, p = 0.789$). Subsequently, emotional exhaustion was used as a result variable, and the above steps were repeated. From the results, it can be seen that high-performance work systems have no significant effect on emotional exhaustion ($\beta = 0.583, p = 0.000$). Union practice can significantly regulate the relationship between high-performance work systems and emotional exhaustion. ($B = 0.157, p = 0.043$).

Table 3 Regression Results of the Relationship Between HPWS, Physical Well-being and Union Practice

	Work anxiety			Emotional exhaustion		
	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6
constants						
sex	.324	.265	.210	.187	.200	.212
age	.043	.063	.009	.076	.071	.087
edu	-.257	-.142	-.146	-.156	-.182	-.176
pol	.017	.025	.029	.177	.175	.174
typ	-.214	-.154	-.062	-.339	-.352	-.363
siz	-.048	-.002	-.038	.184	.174	.162
Com post	.158	.196	.164	-.060	-.069	-.050
union post	.076	.094	.093	-.067	-.071	-.066
HPWS		.396***	-.052		-.089	-.042
UP			.460**			-.052
HPWS×UP			.031			-.097

6. Results and analysis

(1) High-performance work systems have dual effects on employee well-being. From the above analysis results, it can be seen that high-performance work systems can positively affect employees' affective commitment and job satisfaction, and can also increase employees' work anxiety, but there is no significant relationship with employees' emotional exhaustion. This shows that the high-performance work system has a dual effect on employees 'well-being. That is, while the high-performance work system improves employees' affective commitment and job satisfaction, it also increases their work anxiety. This proves that the high-performance work system can not only convey the respected and valued information to employees, which improves the subjective perception of employees and the psychological well-being of employees. At the same time, the high-performance work system also transmitted high-demand messages to employees, causing anxiety among employees. This confirms the previous research to a certain extent, and proves that there are always defects in high-performance work systems.

(2) The regulating role of trade unions. From the above analysis results, it can be seen that unions can positively regulate the relationship between high-performance work systems and affective commitment and job satisfaction.

Specifically, in companies with better union work, high-performance work systems The positive relationship between affective commitment is stronger, and in companies with poor union work, the positive relationship between high-performance work systems and job satisfaction and affective commitment is weak. But unions cannot regulate the relationship between high-performance work systems and work anxiety and emotional exhaustion. This shows that the information transmitted by the union's work to employees in the company is more favorable to welfare than security. This information can strengthen the high-performance work system's transmission of attention and respect to employees, so that employees in the enterprise Can have higher psychological well-being, but the union has not transmitted sufficient security information to employees, which has resulted in employees not being able to perceive effective solutions when faced with high job requirements brought about by high-performance work systems. Emotions such as anxiety, which negatively affect the health of employees.

7. Discussions

(1) For enterprises, when increasing the work satisfaction and affective commitment of employees through high-performance work systems, while increasing the work efficiency and enthusiasm of employees, at the same time, whether the higher work intensity will cause employees' Negative experience. At this time, enterprises should obtain daily information of employees through various channels to ensure that employees not only have a positive subjective experience in the enterprise, but also ensure that employees do not cause corresponding negative experiences due to excessive work pressure. Such as work anxiety, can work in a healthy state.

(2) For the union, the union has always been working in the enterprise to assist the company in production and operation and to provide benefits to employees. Therefore, the union can help companies strengthen the relationship between high-performance work systems and employees' psychological well-being. However, from another perspective, because the union has been engaged in this type of activity for a long time, employees have lost their trust in the union's rights protection function. In the workplace, even if union activities are frequent and complete, it still cannot alleviate the negative effects of anxiety and emotional exhaustion caused by high-performance work systems. Therefore, the union strengthens the protection of employees 'rights and interests in the daily work, increases the employees' trust in the union's ability to safeguard their rights, thereby alleviating the negative feelings brought by the high-performance work system, and thereby creating a good atmosphere of labor-management relations within the enterprise.

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