



JOB INVOLVEMENT IN CURRENT RESEARCH: UPDATE AND STATE OF THE ART

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El presente trabajo proporciona una revisión sistemática de la investigación empírica contemporánea sobre implicación con el trabajo. Se examinaron bases especializadas obteniéndose 65 estudios correspondientes al período enero 2008- enero 2018. Los hallazgos más relevantes indican que: (a) predomina la concepción de Kanungo; (b) variables ligadas a la cultura, clima organizacional y diseño del puesto son los antecedentes más explorados; (c) diversas actitudes y comportamientos positivos son correlato de la implicación con el trabajo y; (d) prevalecen investigaciones Ex post facto transversales, de origen asiático y norteamericano, ejecutados sobre muestras de trabajadores de distintos ramos y profesiones. El artículo concluye con algunas consideraciones finales y sugerencias para futuros estudios sobre la temática.

Palabras clave: Implicación, Trabajo, Psicología organizacional positiva, Revisión sistemática.

The present work provides a systematic review on the current empirical research on job involvement. Specialized databases were examined, with 65 studies being obtained, corresponding to the period January 2008-January 2018. The most relevant findings indicate that: (a) Kanungo's conception predominates; (b) variables linked to culture, organizational climate, and job design are the most explored antecedents; (c) positive attitudes and behaviors are outcomes of job involvement, and; (d) ex post facto and cross-sectional research of Asian and North American origin prevails, carried out on samples of employees from different activities and professions. The article concludes with some final considerations and suggestions for future studies on the subject.

Key words: Involvement, Job, Positive organizational psychology, Systematic review.

Attitudes to work constitute a fundamental chapter in organizational literature, occupying a prominent position in the contemporary scientific agenda. Research developed during the last century demonstrates that both the productivity of organizations and the well-being of their members are closely related to the attitudes the individuals develop (Judge, Weiss, Kammeyer-Mueller, & Hulin, 2017). Among these, job involvement stands out as one of the most transcendental.

Its relevance is based on the abundant evidence that demonstrates the benefits of involvement, both for organizations and for the workers themselves. Having employees committed to their jobs means for organizations to have members that are more emotionally committed, dedicated, persevering, intrinsically motivated, proactive and willing to make extraordinary efforts to achieve the objectives and increase their performance. For employees, meanwhile, job involvement leads to higher levels of subjective well-being, job satisfaction, life satisfaction, and enrichment between work and family spheres (Akhtar, Nadir, & Nadir, 2016; Bholane, 2016; Konradt &

Garbers, 2016; Salessi & Omar, 2018; Scrima, Lorito, Parry, & Falgares, 2014).

While some references to this construct can be traced to the psychological and sociological literature of the early twentieth century (Allport, 1943; Dubin, 1956), the research gained momentum thanks to Lodahl and Kejner (1965). Around 1980 it reached its peak, and in the subsequent years it was relegated to a peripheral position. With the arrival of positive organizational psychology, it regained the attention of academics, maintaining a constant and sustained production from the year 2000 to today (Judge et al., 2017).

However, this renewed interest found a landscape marked by the absence of a unified conceptual perspective, the indiscriminate proliferation of terms, and a succession of scales and questionnaires that, far from enriching the research, actually hindered its progress. As a correlate of these contradictions and disagreements, the determinants and consequences of involvement also became the subject of debate. Faced with this panorama, it is legitimate to ask: What is the conceptualization to which contemporary researchers ascribe? How is the construct operationalized? And what are the main antecedents and results according to the current studies? Additionally, investigating a number of characteristics of the recent scientific production (for example, prevalent methodological designs, countries with higher productivity, etc.) can provide useful information to guide future research.

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The present article attempts to answer these questions through a documentary investigation framed in the guidelines of the systematic bibliographic review (Perestelo-Pérez, 2013). Framed in this methodological strategy, this study realizes a survey of a portion of the recent scientific production, with the following objectives: (a) to determine the predominant conceptual-operational perspective in the current studies; (b) to identify the variables that act as antecedents and consequences of job involvement; and (c) to establish the main characteristics of the investigations developed to date. However, before responding to these objectives it is pertinent to present some preliminary considerations.

Job involvement: from conceptual ambiguity to its status as an independent construct

In its origins, the research on involvement was remarkably ambiguous. It was possible to identify the coexistence of four different conceptualizations, namely: (a) it is understood in terms of the prominent place that work occupies in the person's life (Dubin, 1955; Guion, 1958); (b) it is equated to the employee's work participation (Allport, 1943, Bass, 1965); (c) it is conceived as the degree of importance that work performance has for the subject's self-concept and self-esteem (French & Kanh, 1962; Lodahl & Keiner, 1965) and; (d) it is defined in terms of a cognitive state of psychological identification with the work that is carried out (Brooke, Russell, & Price, 1988; Kanungo, 1982; Paullay, Alliger, & Stone-Romero, 1994).

Although the four conceptualizations mentioned share the common denominator of the relevance of the work, the first refers to the degree of importance attributed to work in general compared to other spheres of life, such as family, leisure, religion and community (Dubin, 1955; Guion, 1958). Conversely, in the other conceptions, involvement is circumscribed to the particular and specific work carried out by the individual (Allport, 1943; Lodahl & Keiner, 1965; Kanungo, 1982). Similarly, while in the second conceptualization (Allport, 1943; Bass, 1965), involvement is understood in strictly behavioral terms (that is, as the degree of autonomy for making decisions and positively influencing the strategy and the results of the organization); in the last two the emphasis falls on the evaluative aspects. However, while one emphasizes emotional components such as self-esteem (Lodahl & Keiner, 1965); the other accentuates the cognitive facet of the construct (Kanungo, 1982).

The conceptual ambiguity and the "excess" of meanings attributed initially to the term were grounds for criticism and questioning. Indeed, several authors (Blau, 1985; Kanungo, 1982) objected that the conceptualization of involvement as participation in work presents some redundancy with the concepts of work autonomy and participative leadership. In the same way, conceiving it as the degree of importance given to work, results in an unavoidable overlap with the construct "work centrality". Hence, such conceptions have not prospered as valid conceptualizations, being practically relegated from the specific literature since 1980 (Brown, 1996).

In order to specify what work involvement is and what it is not, Kanungo (1982) introduced the construct job involvement. From the author's perspective, while work involvement represents a culturally determined normative belief about the importance of work in general; job involvement is a descriptive belief based on the ability of a particular job (the current one) to meet the most important needs of the individual.

In addition to this construct, there have been warnings (Morrow, 1983) that other concepts that make up the nomological framework of organizational psychology (particularly those related to commitment) could also be controversial. This is the case, for example, of the concepts of passion for work, engagement, flow, and organizational commitment.

The term passion describes a strong inclination towards an activity (in this case, work) that generates pleasure and is considered important, its distinguishing note being its internalization in the self (Vallerand, 2015). Even when both passion and work involvement occupy a prominent place in the person's life, involvement does not necessarily arise as a component of their personal identity (Brooke et al., 1988; Kanungo, 1982), a condition that is decisive in the case of passion.

Engagement describes a positive mental state of accomplishment related to work, its main characteristics being vigor, dedication and absorption in the task (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2014). Although engagement and involvement share their motivational nature, engagement constitutes a relatively transient state that oscillates daily to the rhythm of the experiences at work, a situation that has not been proven for involvement, which is free from the influence of everyday minutiae (SaleSSI & Omar, in press).

Flow, meanwhile, constitutes a short-term experience characterized by absolute immersion in work, positive emotions and experiences of enjoyment (Bakker, 2008). Like involvement, flow presupposes experiences of pleasure, motivation, and interest in the task, independently of the results derived from participating in it. However, in flow the work activity is not necessarily significant in the life of the person constituting, in addition, a temporary experience emerging from the interaction with the task and circumscribed by the time that it takes (SaleSSI & Omar, in press).

Finally, commitment refers to a psychological state that characterizes the employee's relationship with the organization, which has repercussions in his/her decision to remain a member of it or not. It is a relationship that is defined by the desire, the need and/or the obligation to remain in it (Meyer, Chris, & Maltin, 2015). While commitment refers expressly to the ties that are established with the organization. Job involvement concerns the individual's bond with his/her work, regardless of the organization in which he/she carries it out. Indeed, it has been proven that commitment has to be a consequence of involvement, rather than a determinant of it (Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006; Scrima et al., 2014).

Beyond the theoretical differences, the uniqueness and



independence of job involvement is supported by empirical evidence. In this sense, for example, a recent study (Salesi & Omar, in press) has shown that the constructs passion for work, flow and job involvement meet the criteria of discriminant validity, from the moment that their respective measurements have been empirically unique, and that each of them represents a phenomenon that the other constructs do not capture. In the same vein, numerous studies (Brooke et al., 1988; Hallberg & Schaufeli 2006; Mathieu & Farr, 1991; Scrima et al., 2014) that have analyzed the links among involvement, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. In parallel, there is numerous evidence to show the predictive and incremental validity attributable to involvement. Thus, for example, it has been demonstrated that work involvement explains both the effectiveness in performance, and the execution of organizational citizenship behaviors, beyond the level of job satisfaction and work ethic, respectively (Rotenberry & Moberg, 2007; Whiteoak, 2015). Taken together, these findings strongly demonstrate that involvement constitutes a theoretical and empirically distinguishable construct from other similar concepts.

The factorial structure of work involvement: one or several dimensions?

Like its conceptualization, the factorial structure of involvement was also controversial, simultaneously being awarded a uni and multidimensional structure, as indicated by the succession of scales and questionnaires designed to measure the construct (Blau, 1985).

Lodahl and Kejner (1965) stand out among the defenders of the multidimensional nature of involvement; they are the authors of one of the most popular instruments for measuring the construct. However, even though these authors concluded that involvement is a construct composed of at least three dimensions, they never wrote about it. Subsequent studies concluded that the dimensions contemplated by these authors could be referring to psychological identification, performance-self-esteem contingencies, and duty (González & De Elena, 1999). However, factor analyses performed on various samples of workers by the authors themselves and by subsequent investigations (Cummings & Bigelow, 1976; Lawler & Hall, 1970; Lodahl & Kejner, 1965) show different results, challenging the stability of the multidimensional structure of involvement.

Several authors (Blau, 1985; Brown, 1996; Kanungo, 1982; Paterson & O'Driscoll, 1990; Paullay et al., 1994; Ramsey, Lassak, & Marshall, 1995; Reeve & Smith, 2001) spoke out against this scenario, questioning the supposed dimensionality of the construct. They emphasized that in the perspective of Lodahl and Kejner (1965) there are three fundamental mistakes, namely: (a) the conception of involvement as an emotional and cognitive state at the same time; (b) its operationalization through indicators that are more relevant to intrinsic motivation and; (c) the equating of the concepts of job involvement and work involvement.

Enrolled in the one-dimensional perspective, Kanungo (1982) developed a new measurement instrument: the Involvement at Work Questionnaire. The factor analyses carried out conserved a single-factor solution consisting of 10 items, with high internal consistency and test-retest reliability ($= .82$; $r = .86$). The empirical evidence shows that this instrument is an ideal tool for evaluating the construct. Its main added value compared to other scales for measuring the construct may be the fact that it constitutes a "pure" operationalization of involvement as psychological identification (Blau, 1985; Paterson & O'Driscoll, 1990; Paullay et al., 1994; Reeve & Smith, 2001). In this way, the problems of validity with which the research on involvement had to deal in its origins are successfully avoided.

METHOD

Design

The present investigation follows the guidelines of the systematic bibliographic review (Perestelo-Pérez, 2013), and it is a retrospective exploratory-descriptive study (Ato, López, & Benavente, 2013).

Procedure

For the execution of this study, the guidelines of the PRISMA declaration (Perestelo-Perez, 2013) for systematic reviews were followed. Figure 1 presents the sequence of search and selection of the studies analyzed.

Phase 1: Database selection. The specific databases PsycINFO, PsycARTICLES, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection, PsycArticles, Psycodoc, and the multidisciplinary databases Academic Search Premier and Scielo were consulted. The search equation was made up of the terms "job involvement" NOT "work involvement", NOT "employee involvement", NOT "employee engagement", given that the latter do not constitute precise descriptors of the object of study addressed here. The search covered the research published between January 2008 and January 2018. This time perimeter was chosen because other publications (Brown, 1996; Klein, Becker, & Meyer, 2009) have already analyzed a large part of the previous scientific production. Only articles in academic journals were considered, disregarding books and chapters, doctoral theses, scientific journals, newspapers, and commercial publications.

Phase 2: Filtering the initial results. The initial results were exported to the EndNote X.7 software package for processing. First, a filter was performed to identify duplicate results. The resulting articles were examined based on the information contained in the title, summary, keywords, article type, publication date and language fields. As a result of this analysis, a second filtering process was carried out, excluding brief reports, presentations, conference proceedings, letters, essays, and works written in languages other than English, Spanish, or Portuguese.



Phase 3: Analysis of preliminary results. The remaining articles were analyzed qualitatively. The inclusion criteria adopted in this instance were established based on four central themes: (a) type of participants (workers from different fields and activities, with or without a dependency relationship); (b) type of study (empirical works); (c) type of measure (validated assessment instruments with evidence of reliability); (d) type of design (experimental and non-experimental studies, using associative-explanatory, cross-sectional or longitudinal strategies). Similarly, as a result of this analysis, there were publications eliminated because, although they included the term “job involvement” in their descriptors, titles and summaries, they actually dealt with conceptually and empirically different constructs (for example, organizational commitment, organizational identification, work motivation, job embeddedness, organizational practices of involvement, among others).

Phase 4: Quantitative-qualitative synthesis. The 65 publications resulting from the filtering processes were analyzed with a view to responding to the proposed objectives. A database was generated with the following categories: (a) authorship and year of publication, (b) design, (c) participants, (d) country where the investigation was conducted, and (f) conceptualization/operationalization of the construct. This information is presented in Table 1.

RESULTS

Conceptualization/operationalization of job involvement

From the analysis of the selected investigations it can be deduced that of the four conceptualizations mentioned, only two remain fully valid in contemporary research. On the one hand, one that emphasizes the importance of work for the subject’s self-concept and self-esteem, the main exponents of which are

Lodahl and Kejner (1965). On the other, one that conceives of involvement as a cognitive state of psychological identification (Kanungo 1982). However, of the two prevailing perspectives, the second is clearly predominant. Indeed, a detailed examination of the articles shows that 49% of the empirical studies reviewed used the Job Involvement Questionnaire by Kanungo (1982); 28% the Job Involvement Scale (Lodahl & Kejner, 1965) in its original or abbreviated versions; and the remaining 23% used other instruments, including, for example, the subscale of job involvement of the Work Environment Scale Questionnaire manual (Moos, 1994).

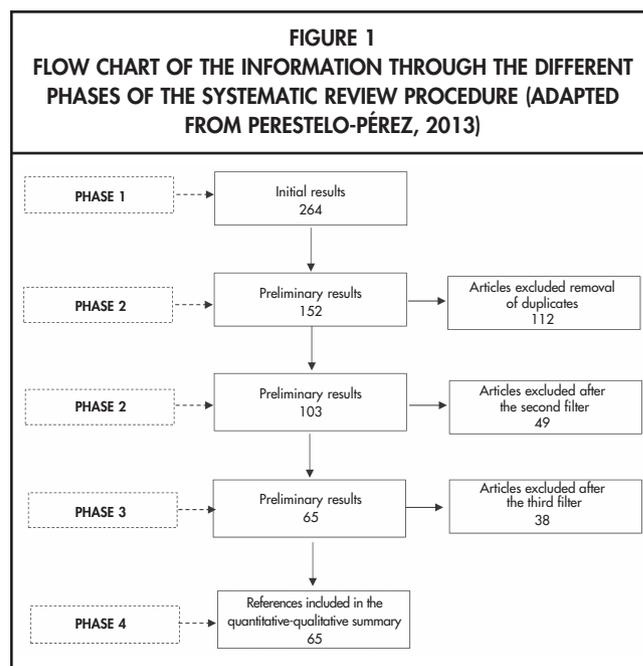


TABLE 1
STUDIES INCLUDED IN THE ANALYZED BIBLIOGRAPHIC PORTFOLIO (N = 65)

Authors/Year	Type of Study	Participants	Country	Conceptualization/Operationalization
González & Rivarés (2018)	Quasi experimental	76 temporary workers	Spain	Kanungo (1982)
Mikkelsen & Olsen (2018)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	9,162 health workers	Norway	Dye (1996)
Wang, Lin, & Liang (2017)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	800 teachers	Taiwan	Kanungo (1982)
Hermawati & Mas (2017)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	224 employees	Nigeria	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)
Tan & Chou (2017)	Ex post facto longitudinal	21 school counselors	Singapore	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)
Welbourne & Sariol (2017)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	250 employees	United States	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)
Kabat-Farr, Walsh, & McGonagle (2017)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	n1: 399 industrial employees n2: 192 child care workers	United States	Kanungo (1982)
Akhtar, Nadir, & Nadir (2016)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	100 bank employees	India	Singh (1984)
Huang, Ahlstrom, Lee, Chen, & Hsieh (2016)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	501 employees and managers	Taiwan	Kanungo (1982)
Lambert, Minor, Wells, & Hogan (2016)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	160 jail workers	United States	Kanungo (1982)
Shrestha & Rojan (2016)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	229 employees	Nepal	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)
Konradt & Garbers (2016)	Ex post facto longitudinal	460 employees	Germany	Kanungo (1982)
Rana, Malik, & Hussain (2016)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	250 post graduate students	Pakistan	Kanungo (1982)



TABLE 1
STUDIES INCLUDED IN THE ANALYZED BIBLIOGRAPHIC PORTFOLIO (N = 65) (Continuation)

Authors/Year	Type of Study	Participants	Country	Conceptualization/ Operationalization
Mei-Ling & Shu-Chen (2016)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	472 nurses	Taiwan	Kanungo (1982)
Atta & Khan (2016)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	494 teachers	Pakistan	Kanungo (1982)
Sulander et al. (2016)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	446 nurses	Finland	Kanungo (1982)
Lambert, Qureshi, Klahm, Smith, & Frank (2016)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	827 policemen/women	India	Kanungo (1982)
Alammar, Alamrani, Alqahtani, & Ahmad (2016)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	558 nurses	Saudi Arabia	Kanungo (1982)
Srivastava, Tiwari, & Srivastava (2016)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	361 teachers	India	Paullay et al. (1994)
Shantz, Arevshatian, Alfes, & Bailey (2016)	Ex post facto longitudinal	414 employees	United Kingdom	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)
Fu (2015)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	385 teachers	Taiwan	Kanungo (1982)
Lin & Hsu (2015)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	150 employees	Taiwan	Kanungo (1982)
Nesje (2015)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	160 nurses	Norway	Kanungo (1982)
Birdie & Jain (2015)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	100 teleworkers	India	Singh (1984)
Rahoti, Arani, Adib-Hajbaghery, & Rostami (2015)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	160 employees	Turkey	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)
Hassan (2014)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	764 public employees	United States	Paullay et al. (1994)
Scrima, Lorito, Parry, & Falgares (2014)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	405 workers	Italy	Kanungo (1982)
Zhang (2014)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	1,110 workers	China	Kanungo (1982)
Zopiatis, Constanti, & Theocharous (2014)	Ex post facto longitudinal	1,500 hotel employees	Cyprus	Kanungo (1982)
Maden (2014)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	252 finance employees	Turkey	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)
Jayawardana, O'Donnell, & Jayakody (2013)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	155 managers	India	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)
Sheikh, Newman, & Al Azzeh (2013)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	229 employees	United Arab Emirates	Kanungo (1982)
Lambert, Hogan, Cheeseman, & Barton-Bellessa (2013)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	200 jail workers	United States	Kanungo (1982)
Kong (2013)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	1,012 hotel employees	China	Kanungo (1982)
Craig, Allen, Reid, Riemenschneider, & Armstrong (2013)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	109 employees from the IT sector	United States	Blau (1985)
von Treuer, McHardy, & Earl (2013)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	105 employees	Australia	Moos (1994)
Lin (2013)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	655 emergency doctors	Taiwan	Kanungo (1982)
Lin, Wang, & Wang (2013)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	258 employees	Taiwan	Reeve & Smith (2001)
Takeuchi & Takeuchi (2013)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	1052 workers from the service sector	Japan	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)
Cheng, Yen, & Chen (2012)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	210 soldiers	Taiwan	Kanungo (1982)
Lambert & Paoline (2012)	Ex post facto longitudinal	1,062 jail workers	United States	Kanungo (1982)
Paoline & Lambert (2012)	Ex post facto longitudinal	1,062 jail workers	United States	Kanungo (1982)
Singh & Sarkar (2012)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	401 female teachers	India	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)
Lawrence & Kacmar (2012)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	134 employees	United States	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)
Feldt, Hyvonen, Oja-Lipasti, Kinnunen, & Salmela-Aro (2012)	Ex post facto longitudinal	120 employees	Finland	Kanungo (1982)
Ting (2011)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	275 teachers	Taiwan	Kanungo (1982)
Wickramasinghe & Wickramasinghe (2011)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	616 sales employees	India	Vroom (1960)
Whitaker (2011)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	202 employee-supervisor dyads	United States	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)
Lin, Jeng, & Wang (2011)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	593 teachers	Taiwan	Vroom. (1964)
Wittmer & Martin (2011)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	2,056 employees	United States	Reeve & Smith (2001)
Koponen et al. (2010)	Ex post facto longitudinal	369 health workers	Finland	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)
De Cuyper et al. (2010)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	n ₁ : 727 Finnish workers n ₂ : 516 Belgian workers	Finland/Belgium	Kanungo (1982)
Griffin, Hogan, Lambert, Tucker-Gail, & Baker (2010)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	160 jail workers	United States	Kanungo (1982)
Blanch & Aluja (2010)	Ex post facto longitudinal	270 engineers	Spain	Kanungo (1982)
Stoner & Gallagher (2010)	Ex post facto longitudinal	126 employees	United States	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)
Zhao & Namasivayam (2009)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	87 university students	China	Reeve & Smith (2001)
Katrinli, Atabay, Gunay, & Guneri (2009)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	148 health workers	Turkey	Kanungo (1982)
Liu, Wang, Zhan, & Shi (2009)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	37 employees	China	Kanungo (1982)
Lambert, Hogan, Barton, & Elechi (2009)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	271 jail employees	United States	Lawler & Hall (1970)
Chen & Chiu (2009)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	323 employees	Taiwan	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)
Hsieh, Pearson, & Kline (2009)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	295 hotel managers	United States	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)
López-Araújo, Osca-Segovia, & Rodríguez Muñoz (2008)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	779 military	Spain	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)
Katrinli, Atabay, Gunay, & Guneri (2008)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	148 health workers	Turkey	Kanungo (1982)
Reid, Riemenschneider, Allen, & Armstrong (2008)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	109 public employees	United States	Blau (1985)
Chughtai (2008)	Ex post facto cross-sectional	208 teachers	Pakistan	Lodahl & Kejner (1965)



Antecedents of job involvement: situational variables vs individual differences

Since the pioneering studies, involvement has been conceived either as an attitude rooted in the more stable dispositions of the personality (Lodahl & Kejner, 1965); or as an attitude subject to the influence of context (Kanungo, 1982). Based on this classification, the main explanatory factors are outlined below. As can be observed, the analysis of the bibliographic data shows that experts have concentrated mainly on exploring the predictive role of situational variables.

Situational variables. Regarding the behavior of the immediate supervisor, the evidence indicates that both the style of leadership adopted and the support provided constitute the most significant variables. In this sense, it has been reported (Cheng et al., 2012; Rana et al., 2016) that transactional and transformational styles have a positive impact on this attitude. Also, compared to the support provided by co-workers, friends and family members; the support from the supervisor has been shown to be the most influential variable on the variance in involvement (Lambert et al., 2016).

Organizational practices and values also play a prominent role as predictors, with numerous findings indicating that clear and formalized procedures, open communication channels and management practices focused on high performance result in greater involvement (Huang et al., 2016; Lambert et al., 2017). In line with the precursor studies, contemporary research (Akinbobola & Bamigbola, 2017; De Cuyper et al., 2010; Hassan, 2014; Lambert & Paoline, 2012) ratifies the positive effect that aspects such as the autonomy to carry out the assigned functions, the variety of skills required in their execution, the significance given to the task and permanent feedback have on job involvement. At the same time, these studies highlight the negative influence of perceptions of role stress, pointing out that contradictory expectations, ambiguity and overload constitute obstacles to the involvement of workers.

Dispositional variables. Among the individual characteristics that have been the object of study, emotional competences and psychological resources seem to be those that have focused most attention (Fu, 2015; Lin & Hsu, 2015; Shrestha & Rojan, 2016). In this sense, the evidence indicates that emotional intelligence positively predicts job involvement; that superficial and deep actions have a differential impact on this attitude, being positive only for the latter and; that psychological capital emerges as a highly significant predictor, explaining about 40% of the variability of job involvement.

Consequences of job involvement: organizational performance vs. individual well-being

Preliminary research has not been able to conclusively establish the causal order between job involvement, performance and satisfaction (Brown, 1996), and questions remain as to the role that it plays in relation to these and other organizationally relevant variables. The examination of the selected studies indicates that the current research has once more taken up the original interests of the pioneering studies,

while at the same time it has deepened the knowledge by analyzing the impact on other key variables. The main consequences of job involvement are outlined below. They have been classified according to their reference to intra/extra-role performance, or to employee well-being and satisfaction.

Intra and extra-role performance. Regarding intra-role performance, the most recent empirical evidence (Hermawati & Mas, 2017; Jayawardana et al., 2013) agrees that it is significantly and positively influenced by the level of involvement of workers. Similarly, several studies show that involvement is related to various behaviors that go beyond what is prescribed, such as proactivity, innovation and organizational citizenship (Singh, & Sarkar, 2012; Zhang, 2014). In the same vein, several studies show that greater identification and commitment to the organization, and less intention to disassociate from it are direct results of involvement (Katrinli et al., 2009; Scrima, et al., 2014; Zopiatas et al. al., 2014).

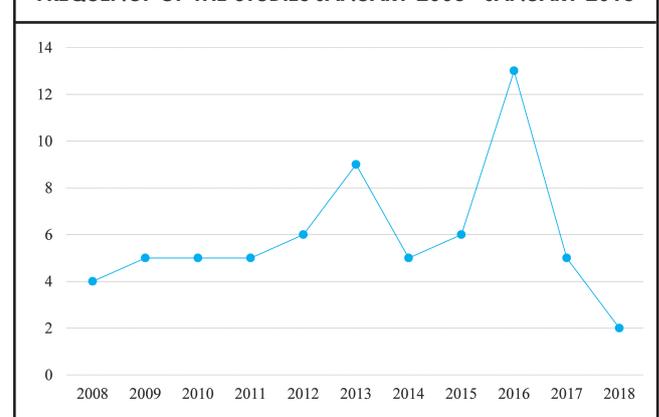
Well-being and satisfaction. Regarding the impact of job involvement on the health and well-being of the workers, the current literature emphasizes that involvement is negatively associated with work stress and burnout (López-Araújo, Osa-Segovia, & Rodríguez Muñoz, 2008; Paoline & Lambert, 2012). At the same time, it has been demonstrated (Akhtar et al., 2016; Bayraktar et al., 2017; Konradt & Garbers, 2016) that people who are involved with their work present higher levels of satisfaction not only in the work domain, but also in their family relationships.

General characteristics of the scientific production on job involvement

Regarding the distribution of publications during the considered period, Figure 2 shows that the research has remained constant, with a strong increase being identified in 2016.

Regarding the origin of the studies analyzed, from the inspection of Figure 3 it can be deduced that Asia and North America are, in that order, the regions in which the most empirical research has been conducted to date.

FIGURE 2
FREQUENCY OF THE STUDIES JANUARY 2008 - JANUARY 2018



A detailed analysis of Table 1 shows that the United States and Taiwan emerge as the countries where the most research has been developed, representing 25% and 18%, respectively, of the studies. Other Asian countries, (mainly China and India) also stand out as prolific countries in the production of scientific knowledge on the subject; while together Europe, Oceania and Africa represent 25% of the total. Regarding Latin America, no published research was found that responded to the search profile defined in this study.

Finally, regarding the methodological strategy, out of the total number of investigations analyzed, 64 studies correspond to quantitative research with *ex post facto* designs, only one quasi-experimental investigation being found (González & Rivarés, 2018). With notable exceptions (for example, Konradt & Garbers, 2016; Shantz et al., 2016; Tan & Chou, 2017; Zopiatis et al., 2014), cross-sectional temporality prevails among the studies. The populations that have been studied are diverse, ranging from specific professional groups (for example, teachers, health workers, penitentiary agents, and service workers), to multi-occupational samples with representation of various items, activities, and types of contracting (temporary and permanent).

DISCUSSION

The general objective of the study presented here was to provide a systematic review of the empirical studies on job involvement published between January 2008 and January 2018. For this purpose, a bibliographic portfolio consisting of 65 academic articles responding to the defined search profile was examined. The analysis carried out allows us to conclude that, when conceptualizing the construct, most of the authors consulted ascribe to the conception of Kanungo (1982). In this sense, in contemporary research, involvement is understood as the cognitive state of psychological identification with work. In other words, it is a situationally determined belief, based on the

perception of the potential of the current job to satisfy the most salient material and psychological needs of the individual. Thus, the current research marks a clear difference between the constructs job involvement and work involvement. Specifically, while the latter constitutes a culturally determined normative belief about the value of work in general, the former is a descriptive belief based on the capacity of a particular job (the current one) to satisfy the most prominent material and psychological needs of the individual.

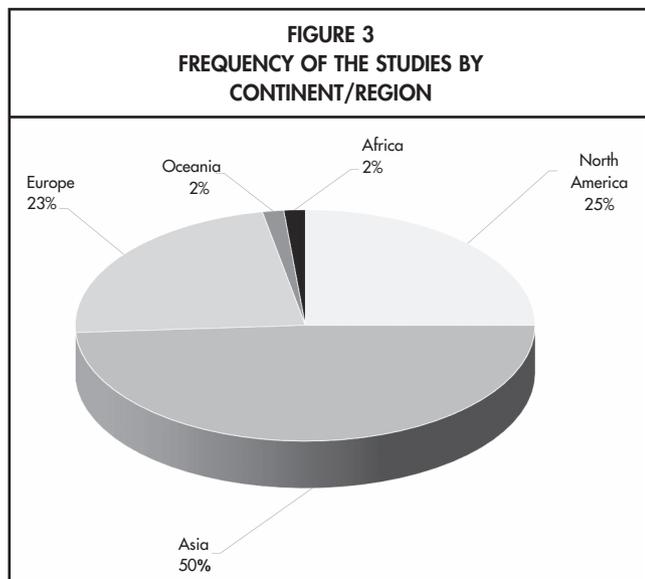
Similarly, most of the studies have applied the instrument developed by Kanungo (1982) to measure the construct, thus ascribing a uni-dimensional conception of job involvement. The current trend is in contrast to the one that, following Reeve and Smith (2001), prevailed until the year 2000, which is the predominant use of the scale developed by Lodahl and Kejner (1965) and, with it, the understanding of involvement as a relatively stable orientation, resistant to the eventual changes in the nature of the work carried out and formed from the introjection into the self of values acquired early during the processes of socialization.

Regarding the background, in its origins the study of the determinants of job involvement has been distributed between what are known as individual factors (which include traits, competences, and relatively stable personality characteristics) and what are known as situational factors (which include characteristics of the task, perceptions of role and organizational climate, and organizational practices). Based on this classification, the analysis of the selected bibliographic portfolio showed that, at present, it is the situational factors that have attracted the interest of the experts. This has possibly been driven by previous findings that underlined a higher explanatory capacity of these variables (Brown, 1996; Rabinowitz & Hall, 1977; Saal, 1978). In this sense, contemporary research has underlined the significant influence of the organizational climate and culture (expressed through the organization's human resource management practices, its values, and the leaders' behavior), rather than the stable dispositions of personality (Akinbobola & Bamigbola, 2017; Hassan, 2014; Lambert et al., 2016; Lambert et al., 2017). Indeed, during the period analyzed, only a few studies (Fu, 2015; Lin & Hsu, 2015; Shrestha & Rojan, 2016) have focused on exploring the role of individual characteristics, circumscribing the analysis of psychological resources and emotional competencies.

With regards to the consequences, recent empirical evidence shows that having employees involved with their jobs means that organizations have more committed and identified members, willing to work beyond the requirements of their function, and capable of achieving and sustaining high performance standards. For employees, meanwhile, job involvement means lower levels of stress and emotional exhaustion, paving the way for the development of other positive attitudes, such as job and life satisfaction (Bayraktar et al., 2017; Hermawati & Mas, 2017; Jayawardana et al., 2013; Konradt & Garbers, 2016).

Concerning the characteristics of recent research, from the analysis of the consulted bibliography, it can be deduced that,

FIGURE 3
FREQUENCY OF THE STUDIES BY
CONTINENT/REGION





with notable exceptions (Konradt & Garbers, 2016; Shantz et al., 2016; Tan & Chou, 2017; Zopiatis et al., 2014), the studies have used non-experimental cross-sectional strategies. They have analyzed different samples of workers and they have been executed in diverse sociocultural contexts. Asian and North American investigations are notably prevalent, while studies that reflect the Latin American situation have not been identified.

Like all research, the present study is not without limitations. Its main question mark may be the fact that, given the inclusion and exclusion criteria established, the sample of articles analyzed is partial and limited, representing, therefore, only a portion of the literature on the subject. To overcome this limitation, it is important that future documentary studies consider the analysis of other scientific communications (for example, conference proceedings, books, chapters, etc.) and publications in languages other than those considered here. Likewise, other scientific databases and complementary resources should be consulted with a view to identifying unpublished research, as well as specialist authors in the subject.

Beyond its limitations, the present study makes a genuine contribution to the organizational literature, facilitating the identification of a number of practical implications for knowledge, research and professional practice. In this sense, the distance covered in these pages contributes to the knowledge by conceptually defining the construct, and by clarifying its differences with other concepts of the nomological network of organizational psychology. Also, from the analysis of the specific literature this article provides an update on job involvement, which allows us to approach this object of study in a rigorous way.

The systematization of the articles presented here offers an overview of the most recent scientific evidence on this issue and can therefore be used as a reference material for professionals and researchers interested in this topic. Indeed, the bibliographic review carried out can bring specialists and human resources managers closer to the knowledge of a new personal resource beyond commitment and engagement. It is a resource that, given its proven positive consequences on the performance and well-being of individuals, calls for the design and implementation of organizational interventions and strategies that guarantee its development.

As this is an exploratory-descriptive work, the study includes the main trends that have characterized the published research, making it possible to identify gaps in knowledge, controversial issues and ratified findings on which to build the future research. In this regard, although much progress has been made in understanding job involvement, there are still several gaps that merit further investigation. Based on our research to date, we have identified the following directions for future studies on the subject of job involvement:

- ✓ To deepen the study of its predictors, investigating its relationships with new and different variables than those classically studied.
- ✓ To explore the possible mediating and/or moderating mechanisms in the relationships between antecedents and consequences of involvement.

- ✓ To deepen the study of the consequences by investigating the possible “dark side” of involvement; whether, under certain conditions, it is associated with potentially harmful phenomena (for example, work addiction).
- ✓ To deepen the analysis of its intervention as a third variable in the framework of multicausal models of moderate mediation or mediated moderation.
- ✓ To develop studies in Latin America that allow us to examine the role of national and organizational culture in the involvement of workers.

The present study has as an ultimate desideratum to counteract the ambiguity that characterized the first stage of research in the subject, establishing that this is a construct with independent status. In this sense, the empirical evidence (Brooke et al., 1988; Hallberg & Schaufeli 2006; Mathieu & Farr, 1991; Rotenberry & Moberg, 2007; Salessi & Omar, in press; Scrima et al., 2014; Whiteoak, 2015) shows that job involvement, as it is conceptualized and operationalized by Kanungo (1982) is a theoretical and empirically distinguishable concept in the psychological space. Thus, laymen and academics have a construct to be able to represent, analyze and evaluate the bond the individual has with their work, in a way that neither commitment, nor engagement, nor passion, etc. manages to capture. Specifically, it is the psychological identification with the specific job that an individual carries out at a particular moment; in other words, the degree to which a person is cognitively involved, occupied and interested in their current job.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

There is no conflict of interests.

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