

MOTIVATION FACTORS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE OF CHINA ENERGY CONSTRUCTION GROUP INVESTMENT CO., LTD.

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to examine the motivational factors and study the work environment that impacts employee performance at China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd. The study collected data from a sample of 300 employees using a questionnaire and adopted convenient sampling methods. Data analysis employed F-tests, t-tests, and multiple regression analysis. The results revealed that both motivational factors and the work environment had a statistically significant effect on employee performance at China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd. The significance level was set at 0.05, and the predictive powers of these factors were 43.0% and 46.4%, respectively.

Keywords: Motivation Factors, Work Environment, Employee Performance

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INTRODUCTION

Energy is a vital element for a country's development and the overall well-being of its people across all aspects of life. Yet, global energy demand continues to rise, driven by population growth and expanding industrial production capacity. This presents a significant challenge in terms of allocating sufficient energy to meet this demand. Moreover, the use of certain forms of energy has substantial environmental impacts, prompting many countries worldwide to explore alternative and sustainable sources of renewable energy (Zou, Zhao, Zhang, & Xiong, 2016).

China is currently the world's largest producer and consumer of energy. Its energy consumption structure includes coal, oil, and clean energy sources such as natural gas, hydropower, nuclear, and solar energy. In 2021, China made a commitment to reduce carbon emissions in response to climate change, aiming to achieve carbon neutrality by 2060 under the 1+N policy. The "1" signifies the goal of reaching the peak of carbon emissions, while "N" encompasses various sub-policies related to regions and businesses. These sub-policies include stringent controls on coal consumption and support for the development of clean energy industries (Dalei, Fubing, Zongli, Qi, Yu, & Qingyun, 2021).

China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd., commonly abbreviated as CECGI, operates as a subsidiary of China Energy Construction Corporation Limited, also known as Energy China. It stands as a prominent state-owned enterprise in China, spearheading advancements in the construction and energy sectors both within the country and globally. CECGI achieves this through strategic investments in energy and comprehensive power projects (China Energy Engineering Group Co., Ltd. [Energy China], n.d.).

CECGI is presently encountering challenges in elevating employee productivity to attain strategic objectives and sustain competitiveness within the company. Recognizing the factors that drive and impact employees' job performance is vital for ensuring ongoing success within the organization. In particular, motivational factors and the work environment have long been acknowledged as pivotal elements influencing employees' job performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018).

The effectiveness of employees plays a significant role in the success and growth of organizations that operate within highly competitive industries (Pradhan & Jena, 2017). Research examining the relationship between motivational factors and the work environment, which influence employees' job performance, has consistently demonstrated the critical role of motivation in driving employees' work performance. Different individuals find motivation in various factors such as recognition, career advancement, autonomy, and work-life balance, which in turn leads to improved job satisfaction. This, in turn, results in increased employee engagement and higher levels of productivity and performance (Latham, 2012). Hence, organizations must tailor their practices to foster innovative thinking and boost motivation among employees. Simultaneously, the work environment plays a pivotal role in determining employee performance through various factors such as organizational culture, leadership styles, job design, and work-life balance, all of which significantly impact employee motivation, job satisfaction, and overall effectiveness (Parker, Wall, & Jackson, 2017). By creating a positive work environment, organizations promote collaboration, trust, and a sense of ownership among employees, ultimately leading to higher levels of commitment and motivation. Conversely, negative work environments characterized by ineffective leadership, a lack of support, or excessive stress can hinder employee motivation, well-being, and performance (Greenbaum & Kyng, 2020).

Therefore, this research aims to study the motivational factors and work environment that impact employee performance within CECGI. The findings will provide insights for improvement and the development of effective strategies to align the work environment.

Additionally, these findings can serve as valuable guidelines for other organizations seeking to enhance employee performance and create a positive work environment.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Concepts and Theories Related to Motivation Factors

Kanfer, Frese, and Johnson (2017) state that for an organization to achieve success, it must be able to produce outcomes or accomplish various tasks in alignment with the organization's set goals. One aspect of this success arises from the cooperation and teamwork among employees within the organization. The motivation of employees within the organization is highly significant as it leads to improved work performance. According to studies in psychology, human behaviors often stem from various sources of motivation, whether they originate from within individuals, other people, or external factors, such as society or personal circumstances. Lens and Vansteenkiste (2020) suggest that motivation is a driving force that leads to actions or behaviors. The term “motive” originates from the Latin word “movere,” which means “to move.” Therefore, motivation in the workplace is crucial for enhancing the behaviors, activities, and actions of individuals to achieve desired goals, objectives, or expectations.

Psychologists and scholars have provided various definitions and interpretations of motivation, as follows: Weiner (2013) defines motivation as the process that drives, guides, or influences individuals to achieve competence and expend efforts to address specific needs, ultimately leading to the attainment of anticipated successful outcomes. Elliot (2021) defines motivation as the desires, wishes, and interests that serve as stimuli or driving forces, propelling individuals toward specific targeted goals. Reeve (2018) defines motivation as the path leading to these goals and helps clarify why individuals behave in particular ways. Peters (2015) defines motivation as a state that enhances intentional behaviors and actions of individuals, directed towards the achievement of desired goals. In summary, motivation is the driving force, reinforcement, or impetus that instills enthusiasm, inspiration, and determination in individuals, empowering them to engage in behaviors with energy, direction, and a sense of purpose to accomplish their goals.

The Theory of Motivation

One theory that has garnered attention and popularity in the study of job satisfaction is Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. Herzberg's research focuses on the factors that influence employees' experiences in the workplace, exploring individuals' attitudes towards their jobs with the aim of increasing job satisfaction and enhancing productivity. According to his study, the factors that impact job satisfaction can be categorized into two main groups: Motivator Factors and Hygiene Factors (Li, 2018).

Motivator Factors are the elements that inspire and elevate employees' work performance, directly related to the positive experiences and rewards they receive from the organization. These factors significantly contribute to employees' job satisfaction and their overall satisfaction with the organization they work for. Motivator Factors include the following: 1) Achievement: This factor pertains to the ability to successfully complete work tasks and achieve goals. It involves active participation in organizational activities, problem-solving skills, and the capability to anticipate and mitigate potential challenges. Accomplishing tasks brings a sense of satisfaction through achievement. 2) Recognition: Recognition involves being acknowledged and appreciated by others for one's abilities. This may come in the form of praise, compliments, or other forms of acknowledgment that demonstrate recognition of an individual's skills and contributions. 3) Advancement or Growth Opportunities: This factor encompasses the potential for career advancement and personal growth within the organization. It includes the opportunity for promotions based on successful performance, as well as access to further education and training. These opportunities motivate individuals within the organization to aspire to excel in their work. 4) Work Itself: This aspect focuses on the intrinsic

characteristics of the job, such as its innovative and creative aspects, its significance and value, the challenges it presents, autonomy in job performance, and alignment with an individual's acquired knowledge and expertise. 5) Responsibility: Responsibility involves having the opportunity to take on tasks and be involved in significant work. It also implies not being overly controlled to the extent that independence in performing one's job is restricted. Examples include an appropriate workload, being trusted and relied upon for important tasks, and being assigned significant responsibilities.

Based on a review of the literature on motivational theories leads to the conclusion that motivator factors are intrinsic needs and internal factors that significantly contribute to the creation of job satisfaction. These factors are directly associated with the job itself and serve as stimuli for employees to work with a sense of satisfaction. They not only foster positive attitudes but also evoke genuine motivation among employees. In this study, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory is employed as it encompasses a range of dimensions and offers flexible measurement methods in comparison to other motivational theories.

Concepts and Theories Related to Work Environment

Schneider, Ehrhart, and Macey (2016) categorized the characteristics of the work environment that enhance job performance into five key aspects: 1) Physical Workspace: This pertains to the physical work environment, encompassing workspaces, desks, and digital spaces like emails, files, and folders. The key to creating an effective workspace is asking critical questions before retaining or discarding items. This process helps reveal the value and significance of the work being undertaken. Physical items in the workspace can be classified into four types: books, documents, stationery, and items with emotional significance. 2) Leadership and Management: Leadership and management entail a combination of personal qualities (personality and character) and attributes (knowledge, skills, techniques) that collectively empower individuals to motivate and inspire others effectively, encouraging them to willingly carry out tasks and achieve objectives. In today's era, management encourages participative management, which involves employee participation in all aspects of management, from planning and organizing to controlling. Consequently, leadership plays a pivotal role throughout the management process. 3) Workload and Resources: This aspect focuses on the allocation of tasks, responsibilities, and the necessary resources for employees to perform their work efficiently. The manageable workload and adequate resources, encompassing time, tools, and support, are critical for employees' work effectiveness, job satisfaction, and well-being. Effectively managing workload and resource allocation helps employees meet work demands, maintain a healthy work-life balance, and prevent burnout. 4) Job Security and Stability: Employees perceive their employment within an organization as secure and stable, which, in turn, increases job satisfaction, commitment, and reduces anxiety and stress levels. Organizations that offer clear career paths, development opportunities, and equitable employment practices promote a sense of stability and job security, thereby enhancing employee loyalty and motivation. 5) Interpersonal Relationships: Positive interpersonal relationships promote trust, respect, and collaborative work, fostering a supportive work environment, well-being, job satisfaction, and teamwork. This, in turn, enhances organizational performance. In conclusion, the work environment encompasses a range of elements, from people like supervisors and colleagues to physical factors such as machinery, equipment, and environmental conditions like air quality, lighting, and sound. Social and psychological aspects, including working hours and compensation, also play a crucial role. These diverse factors have a direct impact on employees' performance, ultimately contributing to higher productivity and overall success.

Concepts and Theories Related to Employee Performance

According to Pradhan and Jena (2017), measuring job performance is a crucial element in an organization's success, as explained below: 1) Quality: Quality pertains to the level of

excellence, precision, and effectiveness in the work or output produced by employees. High-quality work showcases professionalism and a commitment to excellence, aiming to meet or exceed established standards and satisfy customers (Almatrooshi, Singh, & Farouk, 2016). 2) Quantity: Quantity relates to the volume of production or the amount of work completed by employees within a specific timeframe. It quantifies tangible outcomes, such as the number of units produced, tasks accomplished, or goals achieved. Organizations often set quantitative or metric-based targets to assess and reward employees based on their performance and productivity (Taouab & Issor, 2019). 3) Time: Time refers to the timeliness and efficiency with which employees fulfill their assigned tasks or responsibilities. Effective time management skills and the ability to prioritize tasks are essential for employees to successfully complete work within specified timeframes. Efficient time management not only enhances productivity but also reduces stress, contributing to overall organizational effectiveness (Adler, Campion, Colquitt, Grubb, Murphy, Ollander-Krane, & Pulakos, 2016). In summary, the dimensions of employee work performance—quality, quantity, and time—are pivotal aspects for assessing and evaluating different facets of an organization's work. By focusing on these dimensions, organizations can effectively assess and enhance employee work performance to ensure that outcomes align with standards, objectives, and the desired success of the organization.

From the literature review, the conceptual framework can be drawn as shown in Figure 1.

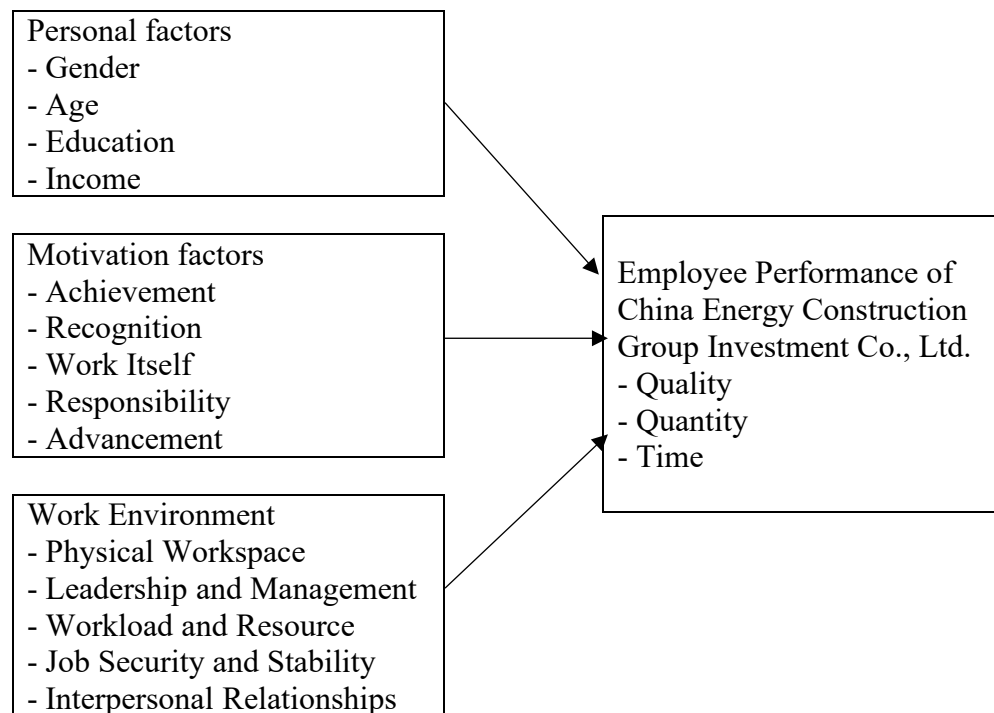


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research population comprised operational-level employees of China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd. When the exact population size was known, data was collected from a sample of 300 individuals. The sample size was determined using Yamane's sampling formula (1973) and selected through convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling method. The primary data collection tool used was questionnaires.

The research questionnaire was developed based on a comprehensive literature review and related research to ensure that the questions aligned with the research objectives. It was divided into five parts as follows: Part 1 contained questions related to general information. Part 2 focused on motivational factors. Part 3 addressed the work environment. Part 4 delved into

employee performance at China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd. Part 5 provided space for comments and additional suggestions.

Data analysis involved descriptive statistics, including frequency tables, percentages, means, and standard deviations, to provide a preliminary understanding of the data. Inferential statistical analyses were conducted to test research hypotheses, with a significance level of 0.05. These analyses included t-tests, F-tests, and multiple regression analysis. The results are presented in a descriptive and tabulated format to provide a comprehensive overview of the findings. Further details are provided in the following section.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The analysis of personal factors reveals the following key findings among the respondents: A majority of respondents are male (62.67%). The largest age group is between 31 and 40 years (38.00%). Possesses a bachelor's degree (58.33%). Report an income the range of 3,001 to 4,000 CNY (40.00%). And the respondents have 1 to 5 years of work experience, (42.33%). Additionally, the majority of respondents express agreement with both the overall and individual aspects of motivational factors, the work environment, and employee performance at China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd.

Table 1 Shows a summary of hypothesis testing of personal factors

Personal factors	Quality	Quantity	Time	Overall
- Gender	-	-	✓	-
- Age	✓	✓	✓	✓
- Education	✓	✓	-	-
- Incomes	✓	✓	✓	✓
- Working experience	-	✓	-	-

Based on the findings in Table 1, it is evident that various age groups and income levels have distinct and statistically significant effects on employee performance at China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd., with significance established at the 0.05 level.

Table 2 Shows a summary of hypothesis testing of motivation factors

Motivational factors	b	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
Constant	1.035	0.211		4.899	.000*		
- Achievements	0.031	0.049	0.039	0.644	.520	0.525	1.904
- Recognition	0.152	0.046	0.210	3.293	.001*	0.468	2.136
- Responsibility	0.064	0.065	0.065	0.984	.326	0.440	2.271
- Work itself	0.266	0.063	0.262	4.210	.000*	0.494	2.025
- Advancement	0.225	0.061	0.221	3.704	.000*	0.534	1.872

$R = 0.663$, $R^2 = 0.439$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.430$, $SE_{EST} = 0.372$, $F = 46.102$, $Sig. = .000^*$

* Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Based on the findings in Table 2, motivational factors, specifically recognition, work itself, and advancement, have a statistically significant impact on employee performance at China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd., with significance established at the 0.05 level. Collectively, these factors exhibit a predictive power of 43.0%.

Table 3 Shows a summary of hypothesis testing of work environment

Motivational factors	b	Std. Error	β	T	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
Constant	1.075	0.281		3.830	.000*		
- Achievements	-0.074	0.065	-0.075	-1.138	.256	0.525	1.904
- Recognition	0.225	0.061	0.258	3.665	.000*	0.468	2.136
- Responsibility	0.096	0.087	0.080	1.107	.269	0.440	2.271
- Work itself	0.304	0.084	0.248	3.621	.000*	0.494	2.025
- Advancement	0.176	0.081	0.144	2.184	.030*	0.534	1.872
R = 0.566, R ² = 0.321, Adjusted R ² = 0.309, SE _{EST} = 0.494, F = 27.772, Sig. = .000*							

* Statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Based on the findings in Table 3, various work environment factors, including the physical workspace, leadership and management, workload and resources, and job security and stability, significantly affect employee performance at China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd., with statistical significance established at the 0.05 level. Collectively, these factors exhibit a predictive power of 46.4%.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Personal Factors and Employee Performance of China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd.

Based on the study reveals that various personal factors, notably age and income, significantly impact employee performance at China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd. These findings underscore the substantial influence of personal characteristics, such as age and financial status, on employees' work habits, goals, and attitudes. Recognizing the diverse capabilities and perspectives of workers across different age groups through the adoption of a multigenerational strategy can create a positive work environment, fostering enhanced organizational performance. According to research conducted by Zhang et al. (2018), younger workers tend to exhibit heightened levels of passion, originality, and flexibility, which often translate into improved job performance. In contrast, older workers generally possess elevated levels of experience, stability, and knowledge. These attributes have a positive impact on their ability to excel in complex roles that require the application of decision-making and problem-solving skills (Clark et al., 2020). Age-related disparities can have a significant influence on employee performance within the context of China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd. Younger employees often excel in rapidly adopting technological innovations and seamlessly integrating them into their work processes. Conversely, more experienced personnel bring valuable skills in transmitting critical knowledge, mentoring younger colleagues, and efficiently managing complex tasks due to their extensive expertise. To maximize performance, it is imperative for the organization to prioritize a multigenerational strategy that fosters collaboration and knowledge sharing among employees from diverse age groups.

Simultaneously, maintaining equitable salary levels across the organization can significantly boost motivation, engagement, and overall job satisfaction, ultimately leading to improved performance. Employee income levels represent a crucial factor in determining their performance. Financial incentives and rewards exert a direct influence on employee motivation and job satisfaction (Earley & Northcraft, 2019). Research consistently demonstrates a positive association between income and work performance. Higher income levels not only provide employees with a greater sense of financial stability but also contribute to their ability to maintain higher levels of motivation, engagement, and commitment, all of which result in heightened productivity. Pay disparities among employees at China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd. can significantly influence various aspects of employee

performance. Higher income levels have the potential to attract top-tier talent and increase employees' motivation to exert more effort, resulting in improved task performance. Conversely, lower income levels may lead to reduced motivation, diminished job satisfaction, and overall lower task performance. As a result, the organization should give serious consideration to conducting comprehensive compensation assessments to ensure that rewards are equitable and commensurate with the contributions of employees. This fosters a positive workplace atmosphere and optimizes levels of performance.

Motivational Factors and Employee Performance of China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd.

Based on the study's results reveal that motivational factors, specifically recognition, the nature of the work itself, and opportunities for advancement, significantly impact employee performance at China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd., with statistical significance. This underscores the critical role of motivation in determining employee performance and productivity within the organization. Recognition, in particular, stands out as an essential motivational factor with a positive influence on employee performance. A study conducted by Jiang, Zhang, Zhang, and Chen (2012) discovered that employees who receive recognition for their accomplishments and contributions tend to be more engaged in their work and are driven to perform at their best. In the cultural context of China, where both peer and superior recognition holds significant value, acknowledgment serves as a powerful motivator of behavior. China Energy Construction Group can significantly boost employee morale and, consequently, enhance productivity by recognizing and appreciating the efforts of its workforce. Additionally, the nature of the work itself stands out as another pivotal motivational factor. The construction industry is renowned for its demanding and challenging work environment. However, employees who derive personal fulfillment and a sense of significance from their roles are more likely to wholeheartedly dedicate themselves to their tasks. According to the Job Characteristics Theory, as developed by Hackman and Oldham in 1976, an individual's motivation can be enhanced when their job provides a sense of autonomy, a variety of skills utilization, a perception of the task's importance, regular feedback, and an understanding of who the work benefits. China Energy Construction Group can instill intrinsic motivation in its workforce by ensuring that employees engage in meaningful and challenging tasks. This, in turn, contributes to heightened productivity. Furthermore, opportunities for career advancement play a crucial role in motivating employees. In China's highly competitive job market, employees are often incentivized to perform at a high level in pursuit of higher job positions and career progression. As indicated by the findings of a study conducted by Zhang, Lu, and Yang (2020), opportunities for promotion and career advancement wield a significant influence on employee motivation, ultimately impacting their performance. China Energy Construction Group can leverage this motivating factor by offering distinct career paths, implementing training and development programs, and adopting a practice of promoting from within the organization. By doing so, the organization enhances the likelihood that employees will find their work engaging and perform at their best, as they recognize the potential for professional growth and advancement within the company. In summary, within China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd., factors such as recognition, the nature of the job, and opportunities for growth represent prominent motivators that significantly influence employee performance. By recognizing the importance of these elements and implementing effective strategies to address them, the organization can foster a motivated workforce. Consequently, this leads to improved employee performance and heightened productivity. Ensuring that employees receive acknowledgment for their contributions, are engaged in meaningful work, and have pathways for career advancement not only benefits the employees themselves but also contributes to the overall success of the business.

Work Environment and Employee Performance of China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd.

Based on the study's findings underscore that work environment factors, specifically the physical workspace, leadership and management, workload and resource allocation, and job security and stability, significantly influence employee performance at China Energy Construction Group Investment Co., Ltd., with statistical significance. This emphasizes the importance of maintaining a favorable working environment to maximize employee performance. An employee's overall productivity and motivation are significantly affected by various elements, including the physical workplace, leadership and management, workload and resource distribution, and job security and stability. To elaborate further, the physical workspace represents a critical aspect that can impact employee satisfaction and performance (Jiang et al., 2021). The organization must ensure that its working environments are designed ergonomically, with easy access to essential resources and comfortable workstations. Research by Zhang et al. (2020) has demonstrated a positive correlation between an employee's engagement and commitment levels and their satisfaction with the physical workplace they occupy. Additionally, effective leadership and management practices play a vital role in optimizing employee performance and satisfaction. As highlighted by Khan et al. (2021), these factors have a critical impact on employee performance. The organization can benefit from fostering a positive organizational culture, providing employees with greater autonomy, establishing open communication channels, and defining clear goals. Moreover, research findings by Shatto et al. (2021) indicate that effective leadership positively influences employees' creative capacities and problem-solving skills. Additionally, well-managed workload and resource allocation play a vital role in enhancing employee job satisfaction and overall performance. The organization should closely monitor how workload is distributed, ensuring alignment with the skills of staff members and providing the necessary resources for effective task completion. As indicated by the research conducted by Lu et al. (2020), proper resource allocation is pivotal in enhancing staff productivity and overall job satisfaction. Furthermore, job security and stability exert a direct influence on employee performance and job satisfaction (Duan et al., 2021). To cultivate a sense of stability and loyalty among the workforce, the company should strive to offer consistent employment conditions, transparent career paths, and equitable performance assessment procedures. According to the findings from the research conducted by Cui et al. (2019), indicating that job security positively influences employee commitment and reduces their intentions to leave the company. In conclusion, the work environment characteristics encompassing workload and resource allocation, leadership and management, physical workspace, and job security and stability exert a significant influence on employee performance at CECIC. By fostering a comfortable physical workspace, implementing effective leadership practices, efficiently managing workloads and resources, and ensuring job security, CECIC can enhance employee productivity, job satisfaction, and commitment. These proactive measures will ultimately contribute to an overall improvement in the company's performance and profitability.

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