

EXPLORING THE INFLUENCING FACTORS OF EMPLOYEE LOYALTY IN RURAL COMMERCIAL BANKS

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Abstract This study aims to examine factors influencing employee loyalty in rural commercial banks, offering strategic insights for human resource management. We obtained 400 employee responses highlights the significant impact of the working environment on loyalty via online survey. Using a linear regression model with variables such as corporate culture, training, and interpersonal relationships, the results show that employee loyalty is primarily influenced by work environment, training, and interpersonal dynamics. Corporate culture, training and development, performance evaluation, work system, interpersonal relationship, work environment and social environment have a significant positive impact on loyalty. Strategies for enhancing loyalty include improving corporate culture and career development opportunities. The findings urge rural banks to adopt a comprehensive management approach that considers both organizational and external factors affecting employee loyalty.

Keyword: Employee Loyalty; Rural Commercial Banks; corporate culture; performance evaluation;

1.Introduction

In recent years, China's banking industry has been undergoing unprecedented changes (Murinde, Rizopoulos, & Zachariadis, 2022). The advancement of financial reform and the rise of Internet finance have brought a huge impact on traditional commercial banks (Dong et al., 2020). At the same time, the rapid development of science and technology has also driven the application of new technologies such as online banking, mobile payment, and smart terminals (Kumar, Lai, Chang, Bhatt, & Su, 2021). The hardware facilities of banks are becoming increasingly intelligent, and the types of business and service methods are also quietly changing (S. M. Lee & Lee, 2020). In this environment, banks have an increasingly urgent need for human resource management, especially the allocation and retention of talents, which has become an important challenge faced by banks in market competition and service transformation (Diener & Špaček, 2021).

However, the reality is not optimistic. At present, China's banking industry is generally facing the dilemma of talent loss and declining employee loyalty (Wu & Kao, 2022). The market environment is more open, and the emergence of digital currency and Internet finance has made it inevitable for China's banking industry to face an increasingly fierce competitive environment (Shen & Hou, 2021). In this case, ensuring talent stability and improving employee loyalty are crucial to the sustainable operation and development of banks (Al Aina & Atan, 2020). In recent years, the annual reports of listed banks have also shown that the branches of various banks are "slimming down" and the number of employees has continued to decrease (Bradley, 2020). How to effectively retain high-quality talents and make them the main force for continuous value creation has become an important issue that companies need to solve urgently.

In response to this problem, the academic community has made some progress in the study of employee loyalty, but there are still some shortcomings. Most of the existing research focuses on the analysis at the enterprise level, and there are relatively few studies on employee loyalty in specific industries, especially in the banking industry (Hossain, Yesmin, Jahan, & Kim, 2021). At the same time, the existing research divides the factors affecting employee loyalty roughly, and lacks the analysis of the specific impact mechanism of different factors in different industry backgrounds (S. Liu, Li, Liu, & Hongwei, 2021).

Based on this, this study takes rural commercial bank employees as the research object, aiming to deeply explore the key factors affecting their loyalty and propose corresponding improvement strategies, in order to provide theoretical reference and practical reference for the human resource management of rural commercial banks. Specifically, this study will analyze the specific variables affecting the loyalty of rural commercial bank employees from the three dimensions of personal factors, enterprise factors and environmental factors, and construct a corresponding model, in order to reveal the interaction between the three and their impact mechanism on employee loyalty.

After the introduction, the second part is a literature review, which mainly introduces employee loyalty and its related concepts, sorts out relevant literature on employee loyalty at home and abroad, and provides a theoretical basis for the research. Part three is the research method, which mainly introduces the questionnaire design, sample selection and data analysis methods. Section four is the investigation and analysis of factors affecting the loyalty of rural commercial bank employees. It mainly summarizes the main influencing variables of personal, corporate and environmental factors on the loyalty of rural commercial bank employees through data verification and analysis. Finally, we put forward suggestions for improving employee loyalty from multiple aspects based on questionnaire data analysis and relevant theoretical applications.

2. Theoretical basis

2.1 Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory originates from the theory of human motivation and is the cornerstone of management research (Latham & Ernst, 2006). It outlines five levels of human needs: physiological needs, safety needs, belonging needs, respect needs, and self-actualization needs (Desmet & Fokkinga, 2020). Individuals will gradually pass through these levels, giving priority to satisfying lower-level needs before moving on to higher-level needs. Meeting employee needs is essential to cultivating loyalty (Sinitsyna, Anand, & Stocker, 2024). This means that organizations should customize incentive mechanisms according to the needs of different employees to encourage them to realize work value and personal value (Hartmann, 2006). As employees progress in their careers, their needs will change, and after material needs are met, they often turn to spiritual pursuits. This study delves into the further needs of contemporary employees in terms of belonging, achievement, and rights, and explores the inherent desire for interpersonal relationships, personal growth, and influence in the workplace.

2.2 Two-factor theory

The two-factor theory proposed by American scholar Herzberg based on questionnaire surveys divides enterprise-related positive factors into hygiene factors and motivational factors (Alfayad & Arif, 2017). Hygiene factors are related to employee dissatisfaction, including corporate strategic policies, financial culture, work environment, interpersonal relationships, etc (B. Lee, Lee, Choi, & Kim, 2022).

Unsatisfactory hygiene factors can lead to employee dissatisfaction, affect work enthusiasm, and even lead to negative indifference (Matzler & Renzl, 2007). Motivational factors are related to employee motivation, including company recognition, promotion opportunities, and a positive work environment (Forson, Ofosu-Dwamena, Opoku, & Adjavon, 2021). These factors can significantly improve employee satisfaction, stimulate employee work enthusiasm, and help improve the company's economic benefits. Motivational factors are the basis for stimulating employee work enthusiasm. Studying the factors affecting employee loyalty requires not only understanding the hygiene factors of employees, but also understanding the root causes of low employee loyalty (Dhir, Dutta, & Ghosh, 2020). Hygiene factors can only solve employee dissatisfaction, but cannot improve satisfaction. Motivational factors play a vital role in improving employee satisfaction (Moro, Ramos, & Rita, 2021). Therefore, the strategy to improve the loyalty of rural commercial bank employees must consider both hygiene factors and motivational factors.

2.3 Three-dimensional theory

The three-dimensional theory believes that employee loyalty is jointly affected by personal factors, corporate factors, and external environmental factors (Chatzopoulou, Manolopoulos, & Agapitou, 2022). Personal factors include personal background, work experience and initial loyalty to the company; corporate factors include salary and benefits, communication mechanisms, promotion mechanisms, corporate culture construction, and the quality of leaders; external environmental factors include competition in the same industry and the social environment's judgment of professional ethics (Anning-Dorson, 2021). This theory emphasizes the interaction between the three factors, which jointly shape employees' loyalty to the company, and provides a theoretical basis for companies to formulate effective employee loyalty management strategies (Bharadwaj, Khan, & Yameen, 2022).

2.4 Hypothesis development

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory intersects with interpersonal relationships by fulfilling social and esteem needs crucial for nurturing employee loyalty (Wrench, Punyanunt-Carter, & Thweatt, 2022). Interpersonal relationships, the emotional and professional bonds among employees and between employees and management, play a pivotal role in creating a sense of belonging and appreciation within the workplace (Davis, Kafka, González-Morales, & Feitosa, 2021). These relationships have a positive impact on loyalty as they contribute to a supportive environment where employees feel valued and connected, thus increasing their commitment to the organization (Murray & Holmes, 2021). Enhancing interpersonal dynamics can boost loyalty by making employees feel integral to the company through activities that promote team cohesion and open communication (Riisla, Wendt, Babalola, & Euwema, 2021). Improvements in interpersonal relationships significantly raise loyalty by meeting employees' social needs and elevating their sense of esteem, leading to a deeper organizational commitment (Xu, Wang, Lian, Khan, & Zhang, 2022). Addressing these aspects ensures a loyal workforce, attuned to the organization's values and goals. Hence, this research posits:

H1: Interpersonal relationship will affect the loyalty of the employees of the rural commercial banks

The Three-Dimensional Theory categorizes the influences on employee loyalty into personal, organizational, and environmental dimensions, with corporate culture, employee training, performance evaluation, and job systems falling under the organizational dimension, directly impacting employees'

work experiences and loyalty (Ababneh, 2021).

Corporate culture represents the aggregate of core values, beliefs, and behavioral norms within an organization, guiding employee behavior and fostering a shared sense of purpose (Solomon & Brown, 2021). Employee training refers to the activities undertaken by an organization to enhance the skills and knowledge of its workforce, facilitating job performance and personal growth (Lai, Tang, Lu, Lee, & Lin, 2020). Performance evaluation is the systematic process of assessing employee job performance, aimed at identifying, evaluating, and developing work efficiency (Awan, Habib, Shoaib Akhtar, & Naveed, 2020). Job systems encompass job structures, promotion paths, and work assignments, forming the foundation of the work environment for employees (Kossek, Perrigino, & Rock, 2021).

The positive impact of these factors on employee loyalty is primarily manifested through the provision of a work environment that aligns with employee expectations, thereby strengthening organizational identification (Dhir et al., 2020). Supporting employees' career growth through training and development opportunities, enhancing satisfaction and loyalty (Susita, Saptono, Susono, & Rahim, 2020); and fostering a sense of security and belonging through fair performance evaluations and rational job systems, thereby increasing loyalty (C. Liu, Wang, & Liang, 2020).

Improvements in these areas can enhance employee loyalty by ensuring the positive dissemination of corporate culture, providing continuous opportunities for employee development, implementing equitable performance evaluation systems, and establishing flexible and efficient job systems (Davidescu, Apostu, Paul, & Casuneanu, 2020). These measures fundamentally meet employee needs, enhance trust and commitment to the organization, and thus significantly boost employee loyalty (Aristana, Arsawan, & Rustiarini, 2022). Therefore, the study proposes:

H2: Corporate culture has a significant impact on employee loyalty in rural commercial banks.

H3: Training and development are closely related to employee loyalty.

H4: Performance evaluation significantly affects employee loyalty in rural commercial banks.

H5: Job systems influence employee loyalty towards rural commercial banks.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, distinguishing between hygiene factors and motivators, aligns with the work and social environments' roles in affecting employee loyalty (Al Darwish & Shafqat, 2023). The work environment—physical and psychological conditions of the workplace—and the social environment—the broader societal context—act as hygiene factors (Roskams & Haynes, 2021). Their adequacy prevents dissatisfaction but does not directly enhance satisfaction. Improving these environments can significantly boost employee loyalty by preventing dissatisfaction (Chen, Xu, & Yao, 2022).

A positive work environment ensures safety and support, while a supportive social environment enhances well-being and belonging (Teo, Bentley, & Nguyen, 2020). Enhancements in these areas prevent dissatisfaction, indirectly fostering loyalty by creating a fulfilling experience for employees (Shahzad, Yaqub, Di Vaio, & Hassan, 2021). This understanding leads to the formulation of hypotheses:

H6: The work environment significantly impacts employee loyalty.

H7: The social environment significantly influences employee loyalty.

3. Method

3.1 Data Collection

Through an online questionnaire survey, this study collect a total of 400 valid samples. All participants were employees of rural commercial banks and had a direct understanding of improving employee loyalty. Table 1 detail the data of the participants in multiple dimensions, including gender, age, educational background, position, years of work, and average monthly income. In terms of gender distribution, there are 154 male employees, accounting for 38.50%, and 246 female employees, accounting for 61.50%. In terms of age distribution, the participants are mainly concentrated between 36 and 40 years old, accounting for 35.00%, followed by employees aged 31-35 and over 40 years old, accounting for 23.25% and 23.75% respectively. In terms of educational background, employees with college and vocational college education background accounted for the highest proportion, accounting for 45.00%, followed by employees with bachelor's degrees, accounting for 32.00%. In terms of position, loan account managers accounted for the highest proportion, accounting for 30.75%, followed by counter staff, accounting for 26.25%. In terms of years of work, employees with 6-10 years accounted for the highest proportion, accounting for 33.00%, followed by employees with more than 10 years, accounting for 29.00%. The distribution of average monthly income shows that most employees have a monthly income between 5001-10000 yuan, accounting for 59.25%, followed by employees with 10001-30000 yuan, accounting for 17.75%.

These data provide us with detailed demographic and background information of rural commercial bank employees, reflecting the diversity and characteristics of employees in different dimensions. Detailed data on gender distribution, age structure, educational background, position distribution, years of work, and average monthly income provide an empirical basis for in-depth analysis of the influencing factors and improvement strategies of rural commercial bank employee loyalty. .

Table1: Frequency analysis results

| Name | Option | Frequency | Percentage (%) | Accumulated percentage (%) |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Gender | Male | 154 | 38.50 | 38.50 |
| | Female | 246 | 61.50 | 100.00 |
| Age | 20-25 | 28 | 7.00 | 7.00 |
| | 26-30 | 44 | 11.00 | 18.00 |
| | 31-35 | 93 | 23.25 | 41.25 |
| | 36-40 | 140 | 35.00 | 76.25 |
| | Over 40 years old | 95 | 23.75 | 100.00 |
| Educational background | High school and following | 12 | 3.00 | 3.00 |
| | College and vocational | 180 | 45.00 | 48.00 |

Table1: Frequency analysis results

| Name | Option | Frequency | Percentage (%) | Accumulated percentage (%) |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Post | Undergraduate course | 128 | 32.00 | 80.00 |
| | Graduate student | 76 | 19.00 | 99.00 |
| | Doctor | 4 | 1.00 | 100.00 |
| | Middle level leaders | 24 | 6.00 | 6.00 |
| | General employees of the department | 48 | 12.00 | 18.00 |
| | Loan Customer Manager | 123 | 30.75 | 48.75 |
| | Financial Customer Manager | 100 | 25.00 | 73.75 |
| | Counter employee | 105 | 26.25 | 100.00 |
| | 0-1 year | 8 | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| Employment time | 2-3 years | 32 | 8.00 | 10.00 |
| | 4-5 years | 112 | 28.00 | 38.00 |
| | 6-10 years | 132 | 33.00 | 71.00 |
| | Over 10 years | 116 | 29.00 | 100.00 |
| Average monthly income | 0-5000 | 68 | 17.00 | 17.00 |
| | 5001-10000 | 237 | 59.25 | 76.25 |
| | 10001-30000 | 71 | 17.75 | 94.00 |
| | 30001-50000 | 20 | 5.00 | 99.00 |
| | Over 50000 | 4 | 1.00 | 100.00 |
| Summation | | 400 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

3.2 Survey instrument

The survey instrument designed to measure employee loyalty in a banking context is structured into three distinct parts, each tailored to gather specific types of data which collectively aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing employee loyalty.

The first part of the survey collects basic personal information of the respondents, which includes

gender, age, education, position, years of employment, and average monthly income. This demographic data is crucial for identifying any correlations between these variables and employee loyalty, serving as control variables in the analysis.

The second part of the survey specifically addresses employee loyalty, utilizing a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" (5) to "strongly disagree" (1). This section comprises ten questions that explore various dimensions of loyalty, such as commitment to staying within the company, pride in the organization, prioritization of collective goals, and willingness to promote the company externally. These items are designed to directly measure the emotional and behavioral aspects of loyalty among employees.

The third part of the survey delves into the factors influencing employee loyalty, based on the multifactor commitment model proposed by (Masindi, Onojaefe, Tengeh, Ukpere, & Adekanmbi, 2024). It breaks down the factors into primary (internal factors, environmental factors, and personal factors) and secondary levels, which include interpersonal relationships, corporate culture, employee training and development, performance evaluation, job system, work environment, and social environment. Each of these secondary factors is explored through multiple survey items, again utilizing the 5-point Likert scale. This structured approach allows the survey to capture a wide array of data on how various aspects of the working environment and personal interactions within the bank influence loyalty.

Overall, the survey instrument encompasses a total of 32 items across the three parts, distributed among various constructs derived from literature. This comprehensive instrument is designed not only to measure the direct expressions of employee loyalty but also to understand the underlying drivers that contribute to or detract from this loyalty in a banking environment.

Subsequently, the study employs data analysis software to perform descriptive statistical analysis, reliability and validity assessments, and regression analysis, thereby exploring the relationships between different variables.

3.3 Data analysis method

In the data analysis part, the reliability analysis of the internal consistency of the questionnaire was first conducted using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The results showed that the Alpha coefficients of each dimension were all greater than 0.7, indicating that the questionnaire had good internal consistency (Vidal-Alaball et al., 2020). Then, the relationship between corporate culture, training and development, performance evaluation, work system, interpersonal relationships, work environment and social environment and employee loyalty was studied using Pearson correlation coefficient and linear regression analysis. The results of the correlation analysis showed that there was a significant positive correlation between these factors and employee loyalty. Regression analysis further verified the significant positive impact of these factors on employee loyalty, among which the impact of the work environment and social environment was the most significant.

4. Results

In this study, the demographic characteristics of the respondents were analyzed using frequency and effective percentage to examine their basic information, which includes six factors: gender, age, education level, position, length of employment, and average monthly income. The specific values are

shown in Table 1:

Table 1: Basic information

Frequency analysis results

| Name | Option | Frequency | Percentage (%) | Accumulated percentage (%) |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Gender | Male | 154 | 38.50 | 38.50 |
| | Female | 246 | 61.50 | 100.00 |
| Age | 20-25 | 28 | 7.00 | 7.00 |
| | 26-30 | 44 | 11.00 | 18.00 |
| | 31-35 | 93 | 23.25 | 41.25 |
| | 36-40 | 140 | 35.00 | 76.25 |
| | Over 40 years old | 95 | 23.75 | 100.00 |
| Educational background | High school and following | 12 | 3.00 | 3.00 |
| | College and vocational | 180 | 45.00 | 48.00 |
| | Undergraduate course | 128 | 32.00 | 80.00 |
| | Graduate student | 76 | 19.00 | 99.00 |
| | Doctor | 4 | 1.00 | 100.00 |
| Post | Middle level leaders | 24 | 6.00 | 6.00 |
| | General employees of the department | 48 | 12.00 | 18.00 |
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| | Counter employee | 105 | 26.25 | 100.00 |
| Employment time | 0-1 year | 8 | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| | 2-3 years | 32 | 8.00 | 10.00 |
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| | Over 10 years | 116 | 29.00 | 100.00 |
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Frequency analysis results

| Name | Option | Frequency | Percentage (%) | Accumulated percentage (%) |
|------------------------|-------------|-----------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Average monthly income | 5001-10000 | 237 | 59.25 | 76.25 |
| | 10001-30000 | 71 | 17.75 | 94.00 |
| | 30001-50000 | 20 | 5.00 | 99.00 |
| | Over 50000 | 4 | 1.00 | 100.00 |
| Summation | | 400 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

From the above table, it can be seen that over 50% of the gender samples choose "female", and the proportion of male samples is 38.50%. 35.00% of the samples will choose "36-40". In terms of educational background, there are relatively more "college and vocational schools" in the sample, accounting for 45.00%. The proportion of undergraduate samples is 32.00%. More than 30% of the sample in the position choose "Loan Customer Manager". From the distribution of employment time, the majority of the samples are 6-10 years, with a total of 132.0, accounting for 33.00%. 59.25% of the samples will choose "5001-10000 yuan".

Table 2: Reliability Analysis

Cronbach Reliability Analysis

| | Name | Correction item total correlation(CITC) | Items that have been deleted α coefficient | Cronbach coefficient | α |
|-------------------|------|---|---|----------------------|----------|
| Loyalty | Lo1 | 0.863 | 0.887 | 0.909 | |
| | Lo2 | 0.625 | 0.903 | | |
| | Lo3 | 0.655 | 0.901 | | |
| | Lo4 | 0.629 | 0.902 | | |
| | Lo5 | 0.669 | 0.9 | | |
| | Lo6 | 0.683 | 0.899 | | |
| | Lo7 | 0.641 | 0.902 | | |
| | Lo8 | 0.657 | 0.901 | | |
| | Lo9 | 0.621 | 0.903 | | |
| | Lo10 | 0.656 | 0.901 | | |
| Corporate culture | A1 | 0.814 | 0.79 | 0.866 | |
| | A2 | 0.7 | 0.836 | | |
| | A3 | 0.688 | 0.841 | | |
| | A4 | 0.69 | 0.842 | | |

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|----|-------|-------|-------|
| | B1 | 0.803 | 0.752 | |
| Training development | B2 | 0.668 | 0.812 | 0.847 |
| | B3 | 0.647 | 0.821 | |
| | B4 | 0.642 | 0.823 | |
| | C1 | 0.798 | 0.744 | |
| Performance evaluation | C2 | 0.657 | 0.808 | 0.842 |
| | C3 | 0.622 | 0.822 | |
| | C4 | 0.653 | 0.809 | |
| | D1 | 0.793 | 0.77 | |
| Job system | D2 | 0.666 | 0.824 | 0.853 |
| | D3 | 0.657 | 0.828 | |
| | D4 | 0.68 | 0.819 | |
| | E1 | 0.806 | 0.755 | |
| Interpersonal relationship | E2 | 0.64 | 0.827 | 0.849 |
| | E3 | 0.683 | 0.81 | |
| | E4 | 0.64 | 0.828 | |
| | F1 | 0.762 | 0.637 | |
| work environment | F2 | 0.62 | 0.782 | 0.811 |
| | F3 | 0.633 | 0.773 | |
| | G1 | 0.743 | 0.697 | |
| Social environment | G2 | 0.66 | 0.775 | 0.822 |
| | G3 | 0.657 | 0.779 | |

From the above table, it can be seen that the Cronbach's Alpha results for each dimension are 0.909, 0.866, 0.847, 0.842, 0.853, 0.849, 0.811, and 0.822, respectively, corresponding to the eight dimensions designed in this article, all greater than 0.7, indicating good internal consistency among the dimensions of the questionnaire. Therefore, the reliability of the results of this survey is excellent.

Table 3: Related analysis

Pearson Relate

| | Corporat e culture | Training develop ment | Perform ance evaluati on | Job system | Interpers onal relations hip | work environ ment | Social environ ment | Loyalty |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------|
| Corporat e culture | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Training develop ment | 0.264** | 1 | | | | | | |
| Perform ance evaluati on | 0.261** | 0.238** | 1 | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---|
| Job system | 0.253** | 0.272** | 0.237** | 1 | | | | |
| Interpersonal relationships | 0.285** | 0.224** | 0.324** | 0.224** | 1 | | | |
| Work environment | 0.320** | 0.278** | 0.320** | 0.382** | 0.338** | 1 | | |
| Social environment | 0.291** | 0.255** | 0.276** | 0.294** | 0.344** | 0.251** | 1 | |
| Loyalty | 0.383** | 0.351** | 0.355** | 0.369** | 0.408** | 0.444** | 0.428** | 1 |

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

From the above table, it can be seen that using relevant analysis to study the correlation between corporate culture, training and development, performance evaluation, job system, interpersonal relationships, work environment, social environment, and loyalty, the Pearson correlation coefficient is used to represent the strength of the correlation. Specific analysis shows that:

There is a significant correlation between corporate culture and loyalty, with correlation coefficient values of 0.383 and correlation coefficient values greater than 0, indicating a positive correlation between corporate culture and loyalty.

There is a significant correlation between training development and loyalty, with correlation coefficient values of 0.351 and correlation coefficient values greater than 0, indicating a positive correlation between training development and loyalty.

There is a significant correlation between performance evaluation and loyalty, with correlation coefficient values of 0.355 and correlation coefficient values greater than 0, indicating a positive correlation between performance evaluation and loyalty.

There is a significant correlation between job system and loyalty, with correlation coefficient values of 0.369 and correlation coefficient values greater than 0, indicating a positive correlation between job system and loyalty.

There is a significant correlation between interpersonal relationships and loyalty, with correlation coefficient values of 0.408 and correlation coefficient values greater than 0, indicating a positive correlation between interpersonal relationships and loyalty.

There is a significant correlation between work environment and loyalty, with correlation coefficient values of 0.444 and correlation coefficient values greater than 0, indicating a positive correlation between work environment and loyalty.

There is a significant correlation between social environment and loyalty, with correlation coefficient values of 0.428 and correlation coefficient values greater than 0, indicating a positive correlation between social environment and loyalty.

Table 4: Regression analysis

Linear regression analysis results (n=400)

| | Non | standardized | Standardization | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> | Collinearity | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|-----------------|----------|----------|--------------|-----------|
| | coefficient | error | coefficient | | | VIF | Tolerance |
| | <i>B</i> | | <i>Beta</i> | | | | |
| Constant | 0.670 | 0.159 | - | 4.209 | 0.000** | - | - |
| Corporate culture | 0.104 | 0.034 | 0.135 | 3.096 | 0.002** | 1.243 | 0.804 |
| Training development | 0.100 | 0.035 | 0.124 | 2.901 | 0.004** | 1.192 | 0.839 |
| Performance evaluation | 0.081 | 0.036 | 0.099 | 2.277 | 0.023* | 1.243 | 0.804 |
| Job system | 0.092 | 0.035 | 0.114 | 2.589 | 0.010** | 1.272 | 0.786 |
| Interpersonal relationship | 0.124 | 0.036 | 0.152 | 3.424 | 0.001** | 1.299 | 0.770 |
| work environment | 0.149 | 0.036 | 0.190 | 4.160 | 0.000** | 1.375 | 0.728 |
| Social environment | 0.149 | 0.034 | 0.196 | 4.451 | 0.000** | 1.274 | 0.785 |
| R^2 | 0.403 | | | | | | |
| Adjusting R^2 | 0.392 | | | | | | |
| <i>F</i> | $F(7,392)=37.772, p=0.000$ | | | | | | |
| D-W value | 1.909 | | | | | | |

Dependent variable: Loyalty

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

Linear regression analysis shows that corporate culture, training and development, performance evaluation, work system, interpersonal relationship, work environment and social environment are independent variables, and loyalty is the dependent variable. The model formula is: Loyalty = 0.670 + 0.104 corporate culture + 0.100 training and development + 0.081 performance evaluation + 0.092 work system + 0.124 interpersonal relationship + 0.149 work environment + 0.149 * social environment. The R square value is 0.403, which means that these factors can explain 40.3% of the change in loyalty. The model passed the F test ($F = 37.772$, $P < 0.05$), indicating that at least one factor has an impact on loyalty. The VIF values are all less than 5, and the D-W value is about 2, indicating that the model has no multicollinearity problems and there is no auto-correlation between sample data, and the model is good. Specific analysis shows that corporate culture, training and development, performance evaluation, work system, interpersonal relationship, work environment and social environment have a significant positive impact on loyalty.

5. Discussion and conclusion

Research clearly shows that corporate culture, training and development, performance evaluation, job systems, interpersonal relationships, work environment and social environment have a significant correlation with employee loyalty, with Pearson correlation coefficients ranging from 0.351 to 0.444. It is worth noting that the working environment has the most significant impact on loyalty, with a correlation coefficient of 0.444, which shows that in addition to simple job satisfaction, other aspects such as the material and psychological conditions of the workplace are crucial to cultivating employees' lasting loyalty. It's important. In contrast, training and development, while still positively related to employee loyalty with a correlation coefficient of 0.351, suggests a subtle but equally important path to employee loyalty, emphasizing the role of ongoing career growth and learning opportunities. These findings not only corroborate the theoretical framework proposed by Maslow, Herzberg, and the three-dimensional theory, but also extend the academic discourse by providing a detailed understanding of how these different factors work together to promote loyalty in the banking industry. This analysis, backed by strong statistical evidence, highlights the need for banking institutions to take a holistic approach to managing employee loyalty that goes beyond traditional incentives and delves into the broader organizational and environmental context.

5.1 Theoretical implication

At present, banks are facing the challenges of intensified external market competition and growing personal needs of employees. Most studies on employee loyalty focus on corporate evaluation, especially on China's five largest state-owned banks (Ervits, 2023), while there are relatively few studies on employee loyalty in rural commercial banks.

The outcomes of this investigation corroborate Maslow's assertion that the fulfillment of employees' foundational needs is instrumental in cultivating loyalty (Khan & Iqbal, 2013). The strategic emphasis on fostering a positive organizational culture and curating attractive career trajectories is congruent with Maslow's conceptualization of higher-order needs, such as esteem and self-actualization. Diverging from conventional interpretations that predominantly focus on physiological and safety needs, our findings accentuate the criticality of catering to advanced needs in augmenting loyalty. This reflection is consistent with Aldefer's ERG model, which reinterprets Maslow's theory to underscore the salience of growth needs within organizational contexts.

The delineation between hygiene factors and motivators, as proposed by Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, is mirrored in the outcomes of this study, notably in the optimization of job systems and the institution of competitive salary management frameworks (McDonald, 2016). Nonetheless, this research extends Herzberg's theoretical framework by positing that elements traditionally categorized as hygiene factors, such as remuneration, may also function as motivators within the milieu of rural commercial banks. This nuanced observation is in alignment with the modifications suggested by House and Wigdor, advocating for a dynamic categorization of motivational factors contingent upon the organizational context.

The Three-Dimensional Theory, which stratifies the influences on loyalty into personal, organizational, and environmental dimensions, is corroborated by the identification of seven pivotal

factors influencing loyalty in this study (Worthington, Russell-Bennett, & Härtel, 2010). The empirical evidence furnished by this research elucidates the synergistic interactions among these dimensions within the rural banking sector, thereby underscoring the pertinence of a multidimensional perspective in comprehending employee loyalty.

The strategic focus on the enhancement of corporate culture and the establishment of a competitive salary management system resonates with the intrinsic and extrinsic motivators delineated in the theories of Maslow and Herzberg. However, the identification of work environment and social environment as critical determinants introduces an expansive viewpoint on loyalty, positing that external factors wield a more substantial influence than previously recognized by Maslow and Herzberg. This assertion is supported by Rhoades and Eisenberger, who highlighted the significance of perceived organizational support in influencing employee loyalty.

Moreover, the accentuation on communication mechanisms and interpersonal relationships as pivotal to loyalty enhancement aligns with the Three-Dimensional Theory's emphasis on personal factors. This facet of our research is congruent with Morrison's findings, which underscored the importance of interpersonal dynamics in employee retention strategies.

The integration of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and the Three-Dimensional Theory with the empirical insights from this study not only corroborates existing theoretical frameworks but also introduces novel perspectives on the dynamics of employee loyalty within rural commercial banks. This research underscores the multifaceted nature of fostering loyalty, advocating for a comprehensive approach that encompasses a broad spectrum of factors, ranging from individual needs and organizational culture to overarching environmental influences.

5.2 Practical implications

The elucidation of the positive correlation between various organizational factors—such as corporate culture, training and development, performance evaluation, job system, interpersonal relationships, work environment, and social environment—and employee loyalty in rural commercial banks necessitates a multi-faceted approach to management and policy formulation. This approach should transcend traditional methods to incorporate strategies that foster a holistic enhancement of employee loyalty. Specifically, the findings advocate for the implementation of policies that not only refine organizational structures and practices but also address the broader socio-economic and relational dimensions influencing employee loyalty.

Management teams within banking institutions are tasked with a critical role in actualizing the insights from this study. The observed significance of a proactive and open corporate culture, alongside effective training and development programs, suggests that banks should allocate resources towards establishing comprehensive support systems for employees. This entails crafting personalized career development plans, promoting transparent performance evaluation processes, and cultivating an inclusive work environment. Moreover, the emphasis on interpersonal relationships and a supportive social atmosphere within the workplace indicates the necessity of fostering a culture that values diversity and inclusivity, thereby enhancing employee engagement and loyalty.

Furthermore, the research accentuates the imperative for collaborative endeavors among policymakers, banking institutions, and human resource professionals in cultivating employee loyalty.

Such collaborations should aim to devise integrated strategies that not only refine organizational practices but also address the external factors influencing employee loyalty. For instance, partnerships could be formed to advocate for policies that ensure equitable access to professional development opportunities and foster a banking sector that is resilient, inclusive, and conducive to employee loyalty.

In essence, by adopting a comprehensive strategy that addresses both the organizational and external determinants of employee loyalty, stakeholders can significantly ameliorate loyalty levels among employees within rural commercial banks. This approach not only mitigates the challenges posed by the banking sector's dynamic nature but also propels the institutions towards achieving sustainable growth and competitive advantage. Through the implementation of these strategies, the banking sector can move towards a future where employee loyalty is not merely an aspiration but a tangible reality, underpinning the sector's resilience and prosperity.

6. Conclusion

This paper deeply study the current situation of employee loyalty in rural commercial banks and finds that it is affected by seven factors: corporate culture, training and development, performance evaluation, work system, interpersonal relationships, work environment, and social environment.

Based on this, a series of strategies to enhance employee loyalty in rural commercial banks are proposed: establishing a more positive corporate culture, designing a good career path, optimizing job promotion mechanisms, establishing a competitive salary management system, and improving communication mechanisms and internal interpersonal relationships in the enterprise. These strategies are aimed at improving employee satisfaction and loyalty, and provide alternative solutions for rural commercial banks to solve the problem of low employee loyalty.

Based on the conclusions of this paper, the following prospects for future research directions are proposed: First, in view of the limitations of this study, combined with the characteristics of the banking industry and relevant literature on employee loyalty and its influencing factors at home and abroad, future research will further analyze the factors affecting employee loyalty in rural commercial banks. More data will be collected to support subsequent model testing and provide more reference conclusions for the banking industry to optimize the stability of the employee team. Secondly, future research can increase the categories of factors related to the surveyed employees and explore the impact of factors such as gender, age, and education on employee loyalty. In addition, the analysis of the impact of epidemic factors on the stability of bank employees can be increased.

Against the background of increasingly complex and changing external environment and increasing internal employee demand, banks must attach great importance to talent management. Banks have achieved certain results in human resource management through continuous reform and innovation, but they still face many problems. For example, traditional management concepts are gradually out of touch with employee needs, corporate culture has not been effectively infiltrated, and the work and salary system has failed to meet the requirements of human resource management in the new era, resulting in the loss of a large number of outstanding talents.

Employee loyalty, as an important benchmark for bank human resource management, is closely related to the success or failure of the banking industry. Loyalty is efficiency. By taking effective measures to cultivate employee loyalty, companies can motivate employees to spontaneously cultivate

customer loyalty and promote the development and progress of banks. Improving employee loyalty can effectively reduce talent loss, reduce the cost of bank human resource replacement, and maximize the value of bank human resources, thereby serving the development of the bank. When employees feel the company's care, they will be grateful and express their love for the company through actions and work results, so as to achieve a win-win situation for employees and the company.

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