

A Study Of Factors Related To Perceived Organizational Support: A Special Reference To IT Sector

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Abstract

This scientific investigation attempts to study the factors that impact perceived organizational support (POS) and have an influence on employees' performance. POS is all about employee's views regarding their contribution to the organization and the influence that various organizational factors have on them. The sample for the study included 120 employees of the IT sector to whom a self-designed questionnaire was sent through E mail for the purpose of data collection. The result of the study has been evaluated using relevant software and it clearly shows that some of the factors of POS have a positive relationship with employee's performance while some have negative. This implies that the organization values contribution of the employees towards them. The study has implications for human resource professionals, managers and researchers.

KEYWORDS Perceived organizational support, IT sector, employees, career mentoring.

Introduction

Research on POS has proved that when supervisors are concerned about the employee's loyalty to the organization, employees are concerned about the organization's dedication to them. The organization is seen by the employees as a valuable provider of socio-emotional resources such as compassion and regard, as well as concrete advantages like pay and medical coverage, which meets employees' desires for acceptance and affinity by being highly esteemed by the organization. Positive organization evaluation also indicates that additional work is recognized and rewarded in the organization (Mak & Sockel, 2001). As a result, employees take a keen interest in their employer's opinion about them.

The Organizational Support Theory states that workers create a perception about how much their contribution is valued by the organization and how much their well-being is being taken care of. (Jawahar, Stonee, & Kisamore, 2007). Employees feel committed to assisting the organization to achieve its goals due to their emotional connection to the organization and their anticipation that increased performance would be rewarded which is a part of perceived organizational support (POS). Improvements in in-role and extra power, as well as a decrease in stress and withdrawal behaviors like absenteeism and turnover, would be behavioral consequences of POS (Gaylard, Sutherland, & Viedge, 2005).

Perceived Organizational Support

The employee's perception that the organization cares about and values his or her contribution to the organization's success is called POS. (Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D., 1986). Job performance and well-being have both proved to have an impact by POS (Jawahar, Stonee, & Kisamore, 2007). The extent to which the organization perceive and rewards the efforts, social-economic needs, and provide assistance when they ask for it must be evaluated by the employees. According to organizational support theory, employees work with more zeal to help their organization to achieve its goals in exchange for a high degree of support and offer dedication and endeavors in exchange for monetary and social incentives (I. Yamaguchi, 2001).

Rationale Behind POS

Employees are critical in today's knowledge-based business and employees are seen as a valuable asset. As a result, efforts by the Human Resource Department to identify and analyze the factors that influence employee's performance are a basic requirement to maintain effectiveness and efficiency. According to the researcher, POS is linked to a variety of beneficial outcomes for both the organization and the person, including conscientiousness in performing traditional work tasks, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. In the absence of direct incentives, the organization might take steps to improve POS for the employees in order to decrease turnover and boost retention. As a result, the determinants of POS must be investigated in order to implement steps to raise the level of POS (C.L. Stamper, M.C. Johlke., 2003). There is also evidence that organizations that take steps to persuade employees to show it genuinely cares about their well-being can help counteract the demotivating impacts of employee cynicism and skepticism. Hence, the degree of POS must be investigated in order to take such steps. Interventions aimed at addressing the causes of

POS are more likely to succeed in improving organizational commitment and the quality of employees' work life. Therefore, POS research is required to provide positive results for both the organization and the personnel. This paper also tends to examine the different factors that affect perceived organizational support.

Literature Review:

The studies have revealed that greater levels of POS lead to reduced turnover intentions and a sense of duty among employees to repay the organization with improved work productivity, employee engagement and better OCB. Furthermore, the professional commitment was found to mitigate the impacts of POS on employee's intention to quit the job, commitment towards the organization and perceived obligation. The outcomes of this study offer some insight on how implementing suitable HR policies may affect employee viewpoint and activities.

However, according to various studies it was revealed that there is a need for further research to know how HR and POS are interrelated. For the development of higher POS in POS literature, Shore and Shore (1995) identified two major types of HR practices:-

- (1) Discretionary practices that organization cares about the employees but are not directed by organization strategy or labor contract, and
- (2) Practices of HR department that acknowledges the contribution of the workers towards the organization.

Thus, this hypothesis states that, for the success of any business, HR strategies must show concern for its people and acknowledge their contribution. Aldermen's ERG theory (1972) is a beneficial method of thinking about motivating employees as per literature on motivation. There are three types of human wants that are important related to any organization and which tend to co-exist as per Aldermen's thesis. As per ERG theory,

workers in organizations aim to fulfil three levels of needs:

- (1) Physiological needs i.e. needs which are important for the existence of the human being.
- (2) Relatedness needs i.e. interpersonal relationships among work groups and
- (3) Needs related to thriving of individuals at work.

A number of HR strategies are significant in providing workers with the assistance they need to meet these demands. First and foremost, employees' physiological and existential needs must be met. Encouraging employees to reach their full potential and enhance their talent, is another way to meet growing demand. To satisfy workers' need for relatedness, HR strategies that are significant include positive leader-member exchange and helping workers to maintain work-life balance. Career advancement, leader-member exchange, work-life balance and wage level are essential HR strategies as antecedents of POS.

Antecedents of POS:

Pay level satisfaction

According to the Organizational Support Theory (POS), favorable incentives demonstrate that an organization values its employees' contribution. A specific argument is made that such organizational awards display that the company is concerned and appreciates its workers which in turn contributes to growth in the POS field by showing gratitude and recognition (Allen, N., & Meyer, J. 1990).

Career Development Opportunities

Employees want to enhance their talent and improve their potential to satisfy their need for growth and accomplishment, in addition to addressing physiological requirements (Arwali, 1998). Hence HR strategies may encourage employees to believe in greater POS by offering them with growth opportunities that match their

personal development requirements (Aldermen, 1972).

Work – Family Support

Work family support is yet another HR technique that may fulfill employee requirements and therefore, increases POS. POS might be linked to organizational activities that reinforce employees' perceptions that the company would give sympathetic understanding and material assistance in difficult times at work or at home (Buchanan, 1974). These elements would aid in meeting the demand for emotional support and interpersonal interactions, therefore improving employee POS. Employees are more likely to value their organization if an organization provides a high level of work-family support, and is helpful as well as cares about their well-being.

Leader Member Exchange

As an agent of the organization, the leader evaluates workers' performance and directs discretionary rewards which are critical for POS. The supervisor's treatment of employees tends to influence employee perceptions of the organization's support which results in favorable association with POS.

Only LMX takes into account the dynamic interaction between leader and follower, as well as the exchanges that influence organizational performance. Discretionary incentives connected to work performance, according to Eisenberger and colleagues (1986), were specifically likely to impact POS. The empirical research has linked POS to leader support according to which a leader is responsible for handing over rewards to the workers. LMX may play an important role in POS. Signaling theory by Sheridan and colleagues' (1990) states that top management are more likely to sponsor workers with particular type of early career experiences, resulting in more transfers, higher increases and promotions.

JOB CHARACTERISTICS:

POS is positively affected by the autonomous decision making power that an employee has rather than when they are ordered by the supervisor to perform in a particular manner as



**Challenging
Work**



Autonomy



Task Variety



**Perceived
Workload**

Challenging Work

The degree to which the work necessitates a diverse set of abilities indicate an employee's aspirations to be energized by the job. Information Technology employees have a strong desire for difficult work. The prospect of difficult labor is inherently present (Cohen, 1992). As a result, POS may be connected with an IT work domain that offers individuals with challenges associated with the job.

Autonomy

Individuals' job happiness is affected by their ability to plan work, identify important activities, and make a decision related to the selection of the tasks. The more is the individual's behavioral autonomy, the more accountable he or she will be for the results. Greater stimulus, work outcome and contentment have been linked with Perceived autonomy among information security professionals (J.R. Hackman, 1992). In Japanese set up, Yamaguchi discovered a substantial positive link between autonomy and POS.

Task Variety

A variety of unanticipated or novel occurrences in the work procedure implies that future tasks are unknown, and many of them are unique or difficult to fully specify in advance. Information

per social exchange theory (Cohen, 1992). The four important factors of work engagement are perceived workload, autonomy. Challenging work and task variety.

Technology personnel are usually content when given average degrees of task variety which has been identified as a precursor to POS.

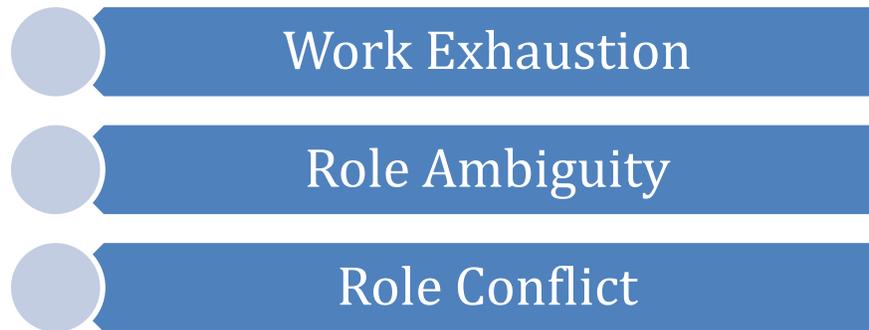
Perceived Workload

Managers can reduce labor expenses by increasing employees' workloads and requiring them to work longer hours. IT professionals are frequently required to handle huge number of tasks and achieve tight schedules, resulting in extra hour of work, working all night, on-call duties and a constant state of 'firefighting' in potential crisis (Meyer, J., & Allen, N, 1984). On the other hand, Missouri performed an IT environmental analysis with data from 23 agencies and it was found that unhappiness and demotivation were a consequence of increased job load.

STRESSORS

Job-related stress is the outcome of management's discretionary judgments about how to structure IT work. The employees describe that if job-related stress in situations can be controlled by the company, then these stressors should enhance POS (Cohen 1992). Given that many IT professionals work "24 hours a day, seven days a week," continuous targets and staffing demands

may end up in a substantial negative connection between job fatigue and POS.



Work Exhaustion

The exhaustion of psychological and intellectual energy in order to satisfy professional expectations is common among software engineers. IT professionals who are overloaded with work have a higher desire to leave. Work fatigue and other psychosomatic symptoms have been negatively linked to POS (Mathieu, J., & Farr, J., 1991).

Role Ambiguity

When a person's instructions are ambiguous, imprecise, or insufficient, this is referred to as role ambiguity. In the IT domain, the link between IT developers' reported role and job stress commitment in the IT work domain has the probability for significant role ambiguity as per the Individual fit theory. (Blau, G., & Boal, K., 1987). Findings on the significance of role ambiguity have been inconsistent in connection with POS with results showing a strong negative association between POS and job ambiguity. Research has indicated a direct connection where role ambiguity was an antecedent of POS,

whereas others identified POS as a mediator between role conflict and job retention with the company.

Role Conflict

The sense of conflicting or inconsistent expectations imposed on an employee arises from the necessity to fulfill the needs of many clients, the repetitive use of work groups, and dynamic technology or processes and it frequently ends up as a significant amount of role conflict (Meyer, J., & Allen, N, 1984). Although POS and role conflict are not positively associated, there could be a causal relationship between the two, or POS may mitigate the influence of role conflict on voluntary intention to leave the job.

Organizational skills

Management can meet employee support requirements in part by offering pay linked with performance and mentorship. These considerations are critical for supervisors attempting to recruit or hold on to Information Technology professionals in a tight labor pool.



Pay for Performance

State governments seeking to retain Information Security personnel frequently emphasize the need to enhance compensation scales (Cohen, 1992). The Michigan government launched a study to examine the methodology of payment to the private sector as well as public sector organizations and categorized IT service delivery in order to create an aggressive strategy to recruit fresh personnel and keep existing employees.

Mentoring

Developmental activities that allow employees to broaden their abilities have a good impact on POS. Mentoring is indeed a pursuit that some businesses employ to increase retention. It may be divided into two categories: professional and psychological. The first category comprises coaching, sponsorship, and protection, while the second category includes acceptance, role modeling, counseling, and friendship (J.R. Hackman, 1992). Counsellor can give social support, which appears to lessen the inclination to leave.

Research Methodology

Discussion and Analysis

For the purpose of data collection, a self-designed questionnaire has been framed and sent via email to 120 employees out of which responses of 100 employees was received and taken into consideration. IT personnel faced frequent challenges and considerable unpredictability in terms of job load and task assigned. They were held liable for delivering Information Technology services to customers by using a latest technology that had not yet been completely absorbed into the governmental system. Because of the reorganization, less number of employees were aware about the new system and top as well as middle management were still getting educated about the system's impact on their work domain.

All survey items were drawn from validated measures, and the scales' psychometric characteristics were evaluated in terms of item loaded and item consistency, both of which were more than 0.70 and thus declared acceptable. Responses were recorded on either a 7-point Liker-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree; or 1 = not significant, 7 = important) or a 7-point frequency-of-occurrence scale (1 = not at all, 7 = to a considerable extent).

Table 1: Descriptive statistics and correlations

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
POS	3.78	1.53	-	0.30	-0.58	-0.26	0.366	-0.72	0.54	0.58	0.25
Exhaustion	4.58	1.25	-	-0.23	0.26	0.37	-0.05	0.36	0.25	0.36	
Job challenge	4.89	1.52		-	0.43	-0.52	0.44	0.25	-0.35	-0.10	
Workload	4.41	1.17			-	-0.23	0.38	-0.11	0.14	-0.16	
Role conflict	4.62	1.23				-	0.31	0.11	0.33	0.27	
Ambiguity	4.65	1.57					-	-0.27	0.08	-0.33	
Psychosocial mentoring	4.03	1.61						-	0.63	0.43	
Career mentoring	3.26	1.15							-	0.27	
Perform-pay	2.71	1.58								-	

(Source: researcher own computation)

The table clearly highlights the descriptive statistics as well as correlations of different variables as influenced by POS. POS with mean 3.78 and standard deviation 1.53 have positive correlation with five of other factor i.e. exhaustions, role conflict, psychosocial mentoring and career mentoring. Exhaustion with mean 4.58 and standard deviation 1.25 have positive relation with five others factor. Job challenges have positives relation with three

factors with mean 4.89 and standard deviation 1.52. Workloads with mean 4.41 and standard deviation 1.17 have positive relation with role conflict, psychosocial mentor. Role conflicts with mean and standard deviation of 4.62 and 1.23 have positive relation with all other factors. Ambiguity, psychosocial mentor, career mentor and performance pay also have positive as well as negative relations with other factors with their mean and standard deviation respectively.

Table 2: Hierarchical Regression Analysis

Variable	B	SE B	B ^a	t
Gender	-0.21	0.19	-0.07	-1.02
Age	0.02	0.03	0.05	0.23
Organizational tenure	-0.03	0.01	-0.36	-1.05
Work challenge	0.13	0.12	0.12	1.50
Perceived workload		0.01	0.15	-1.03
Work exhaustion	-0.14	0.05	-0.08	-2.07
Role ambiguity	0.26	0.03	-0.20	3.00
Role conflict	0.16	0.07	-0.23	-2.79
Pay performance	0.15	0.09	0.18	2.17
Career mentoring	-0.13	0.08	0.35	3.78

(Source: researcher computation using spss 16.0)

B - Beta coefficient

SE B – Standard ErrorB^a- Standard Beta coefficientt- T- statistics

Hierarchical regression was employed, with the control factors, job characteristic variables, stressor variables, and positive discretionary action variables all being entered. We were able to identify the order using a regression analysis of this type. The model included independent variables though the order was not specified in the study., Theoretical and logical concerns were employed. We wanted to find out how workers' POS may be affected differently depending on their employment features, stresses, and positive discretionary acts through means of management. There was statistically insignificant impact of psychosocial mentoring, job difficulty and perceived workload which contributed 63 percent (Adj. R²) of the variation in POS, with role ambiguity and career mentorship having the maximum beneficial impact.

Conclusion

Multiple possible antecedents of POS of IT personnel were explored in our study. It was found as per the Hierarchical regression that 30% of the variance in POS could be associated with the demand for a reasonable workload and challenging work. These were significant factors to consider when attempting to build a supportive atmosphere for IT personnel. The IT personnel in our sample, on the other hand, worked in a company experiencing transformative transition, which is known to stress people. As a result, three new stressors were added: role conflict, job fatigue and role ambiguity. An extra 24 percent of the variance was found in POS as eventually eclipsed relevance of characteristics of the job. Also, for IT professionals, career mentorship contributed 12% of the variation. To conclude, IT professionals showed 63% variation related to work fatigue, job ambiguity, pay-for-performance, role conflict and career mentoring in POS.

Limitations

- (1) Social desirability factor.
- (2) Higher statistical analysis can be done with more variables.

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