

# Effect perceived organizational support on employees' attitudes toward work

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## Abstract

Managers should find the factors which effect on employees' attitude toward work. One of the most important one is employees feel supported their outcomes towards organization are always positive which helps organization to achieve its goals. In summing up it can perceived organizational support. Many studies conform to adaptation perceived organizational support among individuals as a successful factor. The research literature indicates that support employees perceive is positively related to a number of outcomes favorable to both the organization and the individual namely conscientiousness in carrying out conventional job responsibilities, organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Therefore the level of support employees perceive of employees needs to be constantly reviewed to ensure favorable outcomes to the organization which ultimately leads to profitability. The worker's perception of how an organization values him/her may be vital for determining his/her attitudes benefiting the organization. Perceived organizational support is theorized to indirectly impact employee attitudes and behaviors by creating a sense of obligation within individuals. It can also be inferred from the discussion that when be concluded that giving value to employees is actually giving value to itself. Also, it is suggested that not only the perceptions on organizational support and external prestige are important to employees' perceptions of the quality of their exchange relationships with their organizations, but also suggest that these perceptions affect employees' work attitudes and behaviors indirectly, through the quality of exchange relationships with their organization. Also, it is suggested that managers should take the time to discover the organizational resources that individual teaches value and take measures to provide such resources where possible.

**Keywords:** perceived organizational support, attitude, employees' attitudes

## 1. Introduction

Role of organizations are inevitable to improve any country (Moaeri, 2002), and according to Wall, a successful organization is one which could adapt itself to environmental changes during a long-term, create a purposeful management structure, and develop key competencies (Eisakhani, 2008). With the rapidly changing business practices organization are facing increased and mounting challenges. Now organizations are striving to meet these uncalculated challenges which arise with each step to pass. Meeting these challenges requires best use of possible resources. Out of many resources human resource is the best of all. Human resource is the prime source which enables an organization to achieve best out of other available resources like physical, financial and organizational resources. Making best out of human resource can offer lasting competitive edge over rivals, which is dream of every business (Singh and Singh, 2010). But despite skilled, educated and potential workforces, many organizations are unable to attain expected success.

Although the various studies try to identify the key factors of organizational success (Magd, et al. 2007), but employee attitudes and the inclusion of their opinions are most important in today's global and competitive work environment.

How the individual experiences the work situation is what affects her attitudes and behavior: not the actual work situation. This is the reason why it is so very important to study the psychological climate— to better understand the employees' experiences and reactions (James & Jones, 1974). So, managers should find the factors which effect on employees' attitude toward work. One of the most important one is perceived organizational support. Many studies conform to adaptation perceived organizational support among individuals as a successful factor.

Exchange relationship between employee and organization is the basis of “organizational support theory” (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986). Perceptions of organizational support (POS) are an important resource that is getting admired day by day in the management sphere of modern business world especially in the service sector (Mowday, 1998). Organizational support theory (OST: Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Shore & Shore, 1995) holds that in order to meet socio-emotional needs and to assess the benefits of increased work effort, employees form a general perception concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Krishhan & Mary, 2012).

However, organizational support is important as it guarantees assistance provided by the organization to deal with the demanding conditions, and to carry out ones job efficiently and effectively (George, et al., 1993). The amount of organizational support employees perceive has been proved to influence employees' job attitudes. In addition, Wayne et al. (2002) indicated that perceived organizational support reflects to a large extent the quality of the relationship between the organization and the employee (Konijnenburg , 2010).

Also, the study of employee attitude and behavior is, therefore, has gained much importance to determine employee's possible behaviors at work place. Employees' perception about organizational attitude regarding their support is based on organizational employee caring activities e.g. rewarding employees' contribution, employee well-being programs and opportunities for employees to have participation in key organizational decisions. Such perceived organizational support would ultimate shape employee attitude in organizations (Ali, 2010).

The research literature indicates that support employees perceive is positively related to a number of outcomes favorable to both the organization and the individual namely conscientiousness in carrying out conventional job responsibilities, organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Therefore the level of support employees perceive of employees needs to be constantly reviewed to ensure favorable outcomes to the organization which ultimately leads to profitability (Krishhan & Mary, 2012). If individual perception about organizational support is not positives, the organization is not supportive, it would cause of developing negative attitude and behavior at workplace, e.g. work stress, low job performance, lower satisfaction (Rhoades, et al. 2001).

The current study about effect perceived organizational support on employees' attitudes is an example of a growing awareness that human development is multidimensional and multifaceted. Therefore, we will try to familiar employees' perceived organizational support and its effects on employees' attitudes.

## **2. Concept of employees' attitudes**

Allport (1935) defined an attitude as a mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence on the individual's response to all objects and situations to which it is related. A simpler definition of attitude is a mindset or a tendency to act in a particular way due to both an individual's experience and temperament (Pickens, 2005). People's attitudes towards objects in their environment are shaped by perceptual and cognitive processes. These attitudes then affect the person's behavior towards the object. Such attitudes often lean in a definite direction, such as in favor of or against the object (Vliet & Hellgren, 2002).

Attitudes help us define how we *see* situations, as well as define how we *behave* toward the situation or object (Pickens, 2005).

According to above classification, an attitude is composed of three parts: an affective, a cognitive, and a behavioral component. The affective component includes feelings, values, and emotional states; the cognitive component is made up of beliefs concerning whether something is true or false; and, lastly, the behavioral component is comprised of intentions and the decision to act. From this perspective, attitudes

fall between stimuli (e.g. object, people, process) and the responses to these stimuli. According to this tripartite approach, all responses to objects or stimuli are subject to the person's attitude towards the object (Vliet & Hellgre, 2002).

In addition, work attitudes were defined by Staw and Salanick in terms of the individual developing an attitude that is consistent with behavior; this attitude can be considered one manifestation of a commitment mindset. Attitudinal variable i.e. job satisfaction represent work attitude. Job involvement refers to identification with, and interest in, the specific work that one performs (O'Driscoll & Randall, 1999). Studies show employees' attitude toward work could positive and negative outcomes within organizations.

### **3. Perceived organizational support**

While the formal concept of perceived organizational support was not introduced and quantified until the 1980s, the idea of organizational support has been present in the management literature for nearly seventy years (Zagenczyk, 2001). Perceived organizational support is given different words by different researchers and attempts have been made to simplify and explain the concept. Eisenberger *et al.* (1986) defines "perceived organizational support" as "an employee's perception that the organization values his or her contribution and cares about the employee's wellbeing" (Ahmed, et al. 2011). Erdogan and Enders (2007) says "Perceived organizational support refers to the degree to which an individual believes that the organization cares about him/her, values his/her input and provides his/her with help and support". Perceived organizational support is directly linked with three categories of favorable treatment received by employees, such as, organizational rewards and favorable job conditions, fairness and supervisor support, in return favorable outcomes are achieved such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment. All these relations support organizational support theory (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002).

Therefore, organizational support is studied as something that is perceived by an employee. This is a perception or judgment of how much support an employee feels or thinks an organization provides to him or her. In other words, perceived organizational support focuses on the organization's commitment to the employee. This construct is distinct from organizational politics and procedural and distributive justice (Andrews & Kacmar, 2001).

Muse and Stamper (2007) divide perceived organizational support in two constructs i.e. POS-J (care about employees' outcomes and performance) and POS-R (care about employees' well-being and respect). Both these constructs affect the perception of employees about the support given by the organization. If any one of these elements is missing it would affect the overall perception of support given by organization.

### **4. Effect perceived organizational support on employees' attitudes**

With respect to the fundamental assumptions about the nature of the organization, a variety of criteria ranging from the survival of the organization (evolutionary and population ecology perspectives) to profitability (neoclassical theory) may be associated with success (Nategh, 2005).

How employees interpret the organizational environment has an effect on their attitude, motivation, performance, and well-being (Brown & Leigh, 1996). Eisenberger, et al. (1990) suggested that a worker's perception of how an organization values him/her may be vital for determining his/her attitudes benefiting the organization.

Perceived organizational support is based on the humanized qualities of organizations in employees' eyes, manifested by culture, rewards and punishments, system, benefits and payments of organizations. When employees become aware of their organizations' attention, admiration, support and respect towards them, they show positive return to that (Jing-zhou, et al. 2007).

For employees, the organization serves as an important source of socio-emotional resources, such as respect and caring, and tangible benefits, such as wages and medical benefits. Being regarded highly by the organization, it helps to meet employees' needs for approval, esteem, and affiliation. Positive valuation by the organization also provides an indication that increased effort will be noted and rewarded. Employees therefore take an active interest in the regard with which they are held by their employer (Krishhan & Mary, 2012). Also, Eisenberger et al. (1986) suggested that perceived organizational support would be influenced by various aspects of treatment by the organization and its managers, including praise and approval, pay, rank, job enrichment and organizational policies (Nasurdin, et al., 2008).

According to Cropanzano and Greenberg (1997) perceived organizational support is effected by structural aspects includes formal rules and policies decisions and their implementations regarding employees whereas social aspects contains employees are being treated with respect and decorum and providing them with information how to determine final results. Generally word supervisor is used for organization as employees are well aware that their assessment is often conveyed to upper management and further employees associations of supervisor support contribute to perceived organizational support (Kottke & Sharafinski, 1988). Jawahar, et al. (2007) found that perceived organizational support was associated with less emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and moderated the role conflict-emotional exhaustion relationship.

Employees who experience a strong level of perceived organizational support theoretically feel the need to reciprocate favorable organizational treatment with attitudes and behaviors that in turn benefit the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Many studies have found that perceived organizational support is positively associated with organizational citizenship behavior. Asgari and Samah (2008) in his paper found that 35% increase in organizational support will result in 35% increase in organizational citizenship behavior (Ali, 2009).

According to Tourangeau and Cranley (2006), perceived support is an important factor that indirectly affects the intention to remain employed. Tumwesigye (2010) highlight significant relationships between (a) perceived organizational support and organizational commitment, (b) organizational commitment and turnover intentions, (c) perceived organizational support and turnover intentions. Results reveal that whereas support is positively related to organizational commitment, both organizational commitment and support are negatively associated with turnover intentions. Also, Ucar & Ötken (2010) indicated a significant relationship between perceived organizational support and affective commitment and normative commitment, but a negative relationship between perceived organizational support and continuance commitment. Results reveal that organization based self-esteem has a partial mediating role between perceived organizational support and affective commitment and full mediating role between perceived organizational support and continuance commitment.

In Uganda, Onyinyi (2003) investigated the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment among health workers and found a weak but significant relationship between the two variables. Similarly, Makanjee et al. (2006) found that perceived organizational support positively influenced radiographers' organizational commitment in South African hospitals. Earlier, Semogerere (2003) had found that affective commitment was positively correlated with high quality psychological contract which has aspects of perceived organizational support such as fairness and meeting the individual's needs and expectations on the job (Tumwesigye, 2010).

Rhoades & Eisenberger (2002) reviewed more than 70 studies concerning employees' general belief that their work organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being (perceived organizational support). A meta-analysis indicated that 3 major categories of beneficial treatment received by employees (i.e., fairness, supervisor support, and organizational rewards and favorable job conditions) were associated with perceived organizational support. Perceived organizational support, in turn, was related to outcomes favorable to employees (e.g., job satisfaction, positive mood) and the organization (e.g., affective commitment, performance, and lessened withdrawal behavior). These relationships depended on processes assumed by organizational support theory: employees' belief that the organization's actions were discretionary, feeling of obligation to aid the organization, fulfillment of socio-emotional needs, and performance-reward expectancies

On the basis of the reciprocity norm, perceived organizational support should produce a felt obligation to care about the organization's welfare and make employees work harder to help their organization reach its goals. Secondly, the caring, approval, and respect denoted by perceived organizational support should fulfill socio-emotional needs, leading employees to incorporate organizational membership and role status into their social identity. Finally, the perceived organizational support should strengthen employees' beliefs that the organization recognizes and exchanges social where effort and loyalty are traded for tangible and social rewards which also increases the performance (i.e., performance-reward expectancies). These processes should have favorable outcomes both for employees (e.g., increased job satisfaction and

heightened positive mood) and for the organization (e.g., increased affective commitment and performance, reduced turnover) (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Based on the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), perceived organizational support is theorized to indirectly impact employee attitudes and behaviors by creating a sense of obligation within individuals that results in reciprocation (Eisenberger et al., 1986).

If employee's perceives organizational supportive attitude, it would enhance his positive feelings and behavior towards organization e.g. job satisfaction, job performance, organizational commitment (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003). It seems employees' attitudes toward organizations lead to such outcomes.

## 5. Conclusion

Attitudes can have a significant effect on the behavior of a person at work. Employees with higher levels of perceived organizational support are likely to have positive attitudes and behaviors. It would increase employees' felt obligation to help the organization reach its objectives, their affective commitment to the organization, and their expectation that improved performance would be rewarded. Behavioral outcomes of perceived organizational support would include increases in job performance and job satisfaction and decreases in turnover.

It can also be inferred from the discussion that when employees feel supported their outcomes towards organization are always positive which helps organization to achieve its goals. In summing up it can be concluded that giving value to employees is actually giving value to itself.

According to above, it is suggested that not only the perceptions on organizational support and external prestige are important to employees' perceptions of the quality of their exchange relationships with their organizations, but also suggest that these perceptions affect employees' work attitudes and behaviors indirectly, through the quality of exchange relationships with their organization. Also, it is suggested that administrators should take the time to discover the organizational resources that individual teaches value and take measures to provide such resources where possible. As in perceived organizational support literature, the management of a firm must use discretionary or voluntary actions above and beyond that which is required to elicit commitment from its employees.

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