

The Relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Organization Based Self-Esteem among Teachers in Iran

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between perceived organizational support (POS) and organization based self-esteem (OBSE). To measure teacher's POS, Eisenberger et al., Inventory was utilized and to measure teacher's organizational-based self-esteem, Pierce et al., Inventory was utilized. In the present study the reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) for the POS Inventory scale was estimated 0.92 and the Cronbach's alpha for the OBSE scale was estimated 0.75. For data analysis, regression, ANOVA, independent t-test was used. The population was teachers of all three levels of schooling (elementary, middle and high school) in the province of Kermanshah, Iran during academic year 2013-2014. The sample consisted of 396 teachers who were randomly selected from among 46 schools. Results of the study showed that POS has a significant positive correlation with OBSE ($p < .01$). Also, the results of the study revealed that POS was a strong predictor of OBSE. Results indicate that organizational-based self-esteem and perceived organizational support based on any of the demographic variables (age, seniority, level, and degree) is not significant.

Keywords: perceived organizational support, organizational-based self-esteem, and teachers.

1. Introduction:

Support is considered to be an important issue to perform better within the organization. Perceived Organizational Support is defined as the employee's conviction regarding the degree to which an organization and its members rate the employee's well-being (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa, 1986; Ferris, Douglas, and Heller, 2009).

According to organizational support theory, POS meets socioemotional needs and is used by employees to infer the organization's readiness to reward increased efforts made on its behalf. Workers are seen to act in accord with the norm of reciprocity, trading their effort and dedication to the organization for POS and its promise of future benefits. A large body of evidence indicates that employees with high levels of POS judge their jobs more favorably (e.g., increased job satisfaction, more positive mood, and reduced stress) and are more invested in their organization (e.g., increased affective organizational commitment, increased performance and reduced turnover; see review by Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

According to the theory, each party has perceptions and expectations regarding the behavior of the other party, but these expectations and perceptions are related with the timing or the specifics of what each party must render. If both parties benefited from the exchange, neither will know whether the expectations of the other have been fully met. Thus, social exchanges involve reciprocity (Tansky and Cohen, 2001). Based on the above arguments, perceived organizational support encompasses the employees' perception about their organizations' concern with their well-being and their contributions. Perceived organizational support covers the degree to which employees feel that the organization is willing to fairly compensate them with the exchange of their efforts, help them when they need make their work interesting and stimulating, and provide them with adequate working conditions (Aube, Rousseau and Morin, 2007).

POS has been hypothesized to influence employees' general reactions to their job, including job satisfaction (Çakar and Yıldız, 2009), job involvement (George and Brief, 1992) organizational commitment (Eisenberger, Fasolo and Lamastro-Davis, 1990) and intention to leave (Guzzo, Noonan, and Elron, 1994). Organizational commitment is one of the important consequences of POS. Employees with high perceived organizational support feel indebtedness to respond favorably to the organization in the form of positive job attitudes and organizational behaviors and also support organizational goals (Loi, Hang-Yue and Foley, 2006). POS is strongly linked with the respect for organization (Rhodes and Eisenberger 2002; Davis and Gardner 2004). Lack of support results in lowering individuals' moral in terms of his/ identity, integrity, and competency (Aquino and Douglas, 2003; Ferris et al. 2009). Perceived organizational support is also found to be a strong mediator in resulting more positive attitude towards the organization in terms of affective commitment and lesser intent to leave when leader's support is high (Dulac and Shapiro, 2006).

Self-esteem is a concept which has been widely researched during the recent years. Early studies go back to Rosenberg (1965; cited in Pierce and Gardner, 2004) and the construct was defined as the overall self-evaluation of an individual regarding his/her competencies. In other words, it is the level on which the individual expresses approval or disapproval with him/herself. That is, the overall assessment of the individual's own value

as a person. Korman (1970) defines self-esteem as the extent to which the person “sees him/herself as a competent, need-satisfying individual” (p.32) and as a conclusion the individual with a high level of self-esteem has a “sense of personal adequacy and a sense of having achieved need satisfaction in the past” (Korman, 1966, p. 479). A person with high self-esteem is expected to feel good about himself /herself and feel more satisfied.

OBSE reflects the degree to which employees self-perceive themselves as important, meaningful, effectual, and worthwhile within the organizational setting (Pierce, Gardner, Cummings and Dunham, 1989). The definition of OBSE drew interest because it had been hypothesized that the self-esteem of an individual, shaped around work and organizational experiences, has an important role in establishing his/her work-related motivation, attitudes and behavior. Based on this, Korman (1970) had found that employees with higher levels of self-esteem were more inclined to have positive attitudes toward their workplace and perform better than colleagues with lower levels of self-esteem.

Self-esteem is strongly related to individuals ‘acceptance and sense of integrity given in interpersonal relations and workplace. The strong constructs of organization supports i.e.

Leader-Member exchange which is related to one’s relationship with the immediate leader and POS which is related to one’s perception of support provided at organizational level, have been found to influence the employees' organization based self-esteem (Ferris et al. 2009). People feel hazard to their individuality and their self-esteem is lowered when indices for the organization supports is low (Ferris et al. 2009). Thus we propose that:

- *H1*: There is a significant relationship between POS and OBSE.
- *H2*: There is a significant relationship between demographic variables and POS and OBSE.

2. Method

Participants and Procedure for Data analysis

The population consisted of teachers of all three level of schooling (elementary, middle and high school) in the province of Kermanshah, Iran during academic year 2013-2014.

The proposed suitable sample size based on sample size table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) was 379 respondents but 396 people were examined. The sample consisted of 239 male teachers (60.4 percent) and 157 female teachers (39.6 percent) who were randomly selected from 46 schools.

The average age of the respondents was 35.49 years (ranging from 19 to 51 years). The Average length of seniority for teachers was 13.92 years. The gathered data were analyzed using SPSS (Release 20).

Instruments:

POS

To measure teacher's Perceived Organizational Support, Eisenberger et al. (1986) Inventory was utilized. The POS Inventory (Eisenberger et al., 1986) is a measure consisting of 8 items using a 5-point rating scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In the present study the reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) for the Perfectionism Inventory scale was estimated 0.92.

OBSE

The Organizational-Based Self-Esteem Scale consists of 10 items (Pierce et al., 1989). Each of the items reflects an employee’s perception of whether he or she thinks he or she is a valuable, worthwhile, and effective member of his or her organization. The following statements were measured on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree): “I am helpful.” In the present study the Cronbach’s alpha for the OBSE scale was estimated 0.75.

3. Results

The correlations between variables, means, and standard deviations are reported in table 1. Also, Table 1 shows that POS has a significant correlation with OBSE ($p < 0.01$).

Table1. Descriptive statistics and inter-correlations for study variables (n = 396)

	Mean	SD	OBSE
POS	3.2756	.80304	0.209**
OBSE	3.4803	.41821	-

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level; *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

In this study, regression analysis is also conducted to test the hypotheses and to define the direction of relations. A regression analysis was conducted, with OBSE as the dependent variable and POS as independent variables (in table 2). Regression results show that POS can be a predictor of Organizational - Based Self - Esteem. A positive relationship was found between POS and OBSE. The model was statistically significant ($F = 17.99, p < .01, R^2 = 0.20$), in so that H1 is supported by regression analysis results.

Table 2. Regression analysis of the effect of POS on OBSE

	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
POS	0.109	0.026	0.209**	4.242	0.0001

Note: ** Sig. at 0.01 level; * Sig. at 0.05 level

Independent sample t-tests measured differences in sex and measurement scores between male and female teachers (table 3, 4). No significant sex effects were found for POS and OBSE scores, but male teachers had significantly higher levels of POS symptoms than their female counterparts (mean scores of 3.2986 and 3.2404) and male teachers had significantly higher levels of OBSE symptoms than female teachers (mean scores of 3.4879 and 3.4688).

Table 3. Group Statistics

	gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
POS	Male	239	3.2986	0.8036	0.0519
	female	157	3.2404	0.8034	0.0641
OBSE	Male	239	3.4879	.41381	.02677
	female	157	3.4688	.42590	.03399

Table 4. Independent Samples Test

		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower		Upper
POS	Equal variances assumed	.000	0.989	0.705	394	0.481	0.05819	0.0825	-0.1041	0.2204
	Equal variances not assumed			0.705	333.89	0.481	0.05819	0.0825	-0.1041	0.2205
OBSE	Equal variances assumed	.237	.627	.444	394	0.658	.01908	.04301	-.06548	.10363
	Equal variances not assumed			.441	327.03	0.660	.01908	.04326	-.06604	.10419

One-way ANOVA was applied to examine the differences between three years of seniority groups (1-10, 11-20, 21 and upper), age (18-28, 29-40, 41 and upper), degree (Diploma degree, Associate's Degree, Bachelor's degree and master's degree and upper), and level (primary, middle school and high school) in POS and OBSE. The results are provided in Table 5.

As the table 5 shows, the P-value for the variable of POS and OBSE is not significant. In other words, No significant age, seniority, degree, and level effects on POS and OBSE scores were found.

Table 5. One-way ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
differences between three seniority groups in OBSE	Between Groups	.303	2	.151	.864	.422
	Within Groups	68.784	393	.175		
	Total	69.086	395			
differences between three seniority groups in POS	Between Groups	21.051	29	.726	1.137	.289
	Within Groups	233.675	366	.638		
	Total	254.725	395			
differences between three age groups in OBSE	Between Groups	.281	2	.141	.802	.449
	Within Groups	68.772	392	.175		
	Total	69.054	394			
differences between three age groups in POS	Between Groups	22.854	32	.714	1.118	.306
	Within Groups	231.872	363	.639		
	Total	254.725	395			
differences between three degree groups in OBSE	Between Groups	.478	3	.159	.911	.436
	Within Groups	68.608	392	.175		
	Total	69.086	395			
differences between three degree groups in POS	Between Groups	.871	3	.290	.448	.719
	Within Groups	253.854	392	.648		
	Total	254.725	395			
differences between three level groups in OBSE	Between Groups	.478	2	.239	1.369	.256
	Within Groups	68.608	393	.175		
	Total	69.086	395			
differences between three level groups in POS	Between Groups	.140	2	.070	.108	.897
	Within Groups	254.585	393	.648		
	Total	254.725	395			

Therefore, the results using the t-test shows that POS and OBSE based on sex are not significant. Also, the ANOVA results indicate that POS and OBSE based on any of the demographic variables (age, seniority, level, and degree) is not significant. Therefore, the second hypothesis is rejected.

4. Discussion and conclusion:

The purpose of this study was to determine the POS that affect teachers' organizational based self-esteem among teachers in the public schools in Iran. Overall, the results of the study showed that POS effects teachers' OBSE. According to the results, of regression analysis, POS can be a predictor of organizational - based self - esteem (OBSE).

Individuals, to some extent, view themselves through how they are viewed by others. As individuals contact with other people and entities that encourage certain beliefs about the self, it is more likely that they will internalize those beliefs and others' views will become a part of the self. The important parts in this respect are the views and reactions of people and entities that individuals respect and regard as important. If these people hold the self as high, one's own sense of self-esteem will be high (Hewitt, 1997). Within an organizational context, the organization itself is an important source for employees (teachers) (Van Dyne, Vandewalle, Kostova, Latham, and Cummings, 2000). Thus, the appraisal of the organization, reflected in employees' perceived sense of organizational support, may play a key role in enhancing individuals' sense of OBSE. The second logic is that a high sense of OBSE is likely to be psychologically satisfying teachers. When this psychological satisfaction is associated with the organization through perceived organizational support; OBSE can be expected to enhance their commitment to the organization (Lee and Peccei, 2007).

Therefore, we suggest that the favorable treatment that teachers receive from organization, form the sense of self-worth and competence in them as an organization member. Consistent with social exchange theory (SET), when teachers perceived organization as a supportive institute which satisfy their socio-emotional needs and provide favorable job conditions for them, they will obligate to reciprocate the organization care by forming a psychological attachment relationship with it. Our findings also suggest that when teachers perceive the organization be highly supportive, increase their job performance to benefit the organization in the exchange relationship. This result is consistent with this perspective that high OBSE individuals maintain positive job attitudes and exhibit high levels of job performance to be compatible with their self-worth.

Consistent with organizational support theory, POS will satisfy the socio-emotional needs such as need to approval and self-esteem and leading teachers to feel self-worth and competence. According to self-

consistency theory, individual are motivated to engage in behaviors and possess attitudes that are consistent with their self-image. Therefore high OBSE teachers have tendency to promote their level of job performance and develop positive attitudes such as affective commitment, which are compatible with their self-worth as an organization member. Our results showed the positive outcomes of POS. Thus, schools should find ways to promote higher POS beliefs among teachers.

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