INVESTIGATION OF PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT ON EMPLOYEES’ POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARD WORK

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Abstract
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. The aim of this study is survey relationship between perceived organizational support and employees’ work positive attitudes in Islamic Azad University of Kerman. The statistical population in this research contains all employees in Islamic Azad University of Kerman who are 364, and the sample population is determined equal to 188. The tools which are used to collect data were two questionnaires: perceived organizational support and employees’ work positive attitudes, which their validity obtained 0.85 and 0.98, and their reliability obtained 0.95 and 0.82, respectively. For analyzing the data different statistical method have been used by SPSS software. The result shows that there is a meaningful relationship between perceived organizational support (and all its dimensions: supervisor support, justice, organizational rewards, and working conditions) with employees’ work positive attitudes. Employee’s perception toward organizational environment influences on her/his attitude, motivation, performance, and healthy. Perceived organizational support is main important to change employees’ attitude in workplace. Therefore, it is suggested managers via to support employees, to render organizational appropriate rewards, to promote justice and to focus job conditions influence on employees’ work positive attitudes.

Keywords: Perceived Organizational Support, Attitude, Employees’ Attitudes
Introduction
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). 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 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). 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). 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 is investigated perceived organizational support and employees’ positive
attitudes in workplace of the universities of Iran. Therefore, we will try to familiar
employees’ perceived organizational support and its effects on employees’ positive attitudes
in workplace.

Literature review
People's attitudes towards objects in their environment are shaped by perceptual and
cognitive processes. These attitudes then affect the person’s behavior toward 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).
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.

On the other hand, 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) say “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 working 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.

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).

Eisenberger, (1986) designed a model to perceived organizational support as following dimensions: supervisor support, organizational rewards, justic, and working conditions. Also, Ansari (2009) shows that positive work attitudes have five dimensions: enthusiasm to help...
others, attempt to attain higher quality, creativity, tending to get new responsibilities, and complete mission before the date limitation. According to related models, research hypothesis are following:

- There is a meaningful relationship between perceived organizational support and positive work attitudes in Islamic Azad Universities.
- There is a meaningful relationship between supervisor support and positive work attitudes in Islamic Azad Universities.
- There is a meaningful relationship between organizational rewards and positive work attitudes in Islamic Azad Universities.
- There is a meaningful relationship between justice and positive work attitudes in Islamic Azad Universities.
- There is a meaningful relationship between working conditions and positive work attitudes in Islamic Azad Universities.

**Material and methods**

This study used the descriptive method with sort correlation in 2012. The statistical population consisted of all employees of Islamic Azad University in Kerman Branch about 364. According to Cochrane formula (N: statistical population of employees 364; Z: 1.96; d: estimate error- 0.05) were selected about 188 of employees as samples in simple random.

\[
 n = \frac{Z^2}{4d^2} \cdot \frac{1}{1 + \frac{1}{N} \left( \frac{Z^2}{4d^2} - 1 \right)}
\]

To collect data, we used two questionnaires. The first evaluated was evaluated perceived organizational support. This questionnaire consisted of two types of questions: demographic or intermediate variables (age, education, and seniority) and questions about perceived organizational support that evaluated four dimensions: supervisor support, organizational rewards, justice, and working conditions. The second questionnaire was evaluated positive work attitudes. This questionnaire had five dimensions: enthusiasm to help others, attempt to attain higher quality, creativity, tending to get new responsibilities, and complete mission before the date limitation. The questionnaires’ scoring is showed in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring of perceived organizational support questionnaire</th>
<th>Very high</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>low</th>
<th>Very low</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>20.8-46.8</td>
<td>46.8-67.6</td>
<td>67.6-88.4</td>
<td>88.4-109.2</td>
<td>109.2-130</td>
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<tr>
<th>Scoring of positive work attitudes questionnaire</th>
<th>12-27</th>
<th>27-39</th>
<th>39-51</th>
<th>51-63</th>
<th>63-75</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>1-1.8</td>
<td>1.8-2.6</td>
<td>2.6-3.4</td>
<td>3.4-4.2</td>
<td>4.2-5</td>
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The validity of the perceived organizational support and positive work attitudes questionnaires were estimated to be 0.85 and 0.98, respectively. Their reliability was estimated to be 0.95 and 0.82, respectively. To analyze the data, we used frequency tables, Spearman correlation, Regression analysis, ANOVA and T test, using SPSS Software.
Results
The demographic variables showed that, among 230 employees, 48.9% were men and 51.1% were women. Most employees (46.7%) were between the ages of 31-40, 46.4% had a bachelor’s degree, and 53.6% of respondents had 11-20 years of seniority in their position.

Description of perceived organizational support and positive work attitudes variables were ranking 1 to 5; that is, 1 was minimum and 5 were maximum (table 2 and 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Statistics perceived organizational support and its dimensions</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>perceived organizational support</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
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<td>Median</td>
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<td>Mode</td>
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<td>Minimum</td>
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<td>Maximum</td>
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<th>Table 3. Statistics positive work attitudes and its dimensions</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Positive Work attitudes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
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<td>Minimum</td>
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<td>Maximum</td>
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Using the Spearman test, the correlation coefficient showed a calculated -P value and sample size (n=188) is less than 0.05. Therefore, there is a meaningful relationship between perceived organizational support (and all its dimensions: supervisor support, justice, organizational rewards, and working conditions) with positive work attitudes (Table4). According to Regression test, justice dimension has most effect on positive work attitudes.

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<th>Table 4. Spearman test positive work attitudes</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Variable</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>perceived organizational support</td>
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<tr>
<td>supervisor support</td>
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<td>justice</td>
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<td>organizational rewards</td>
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<td>working conditions</td>
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Discussion
How employees interpret the organizational environment has an effect on their attitude, motivation, performance, and well-being (Brown & Leigh, 1996). 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). Eisenberger et al. (1986) found 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 (Kotke & 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.

Findings show that there is a meaningful relationship between perceived organizational support and positive work attitudes. Given that how an organization treats its employees may have a substantial influence on their attitudes towards both their jobs and the organization itself, exploration of linkages between employee perceptions of rewards and the support they receive from their organization is of considerable interest, both theoretically and practically (Shore & Wayne, 1993).

Based on the norm of reciprocity in social exchange, employees with higher levels of POS are more likely to repay the organization with positive attitudes and favorable work behaviors (Eisenberger et al., 1986).

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). So, perceived organizational support could effect on positive work attitudes.

While the way employees are treated by the organization is likely to have a significant impact on employee attitudes and behaviors, the employees’ attitudes toward the occupation or profession they work in may also influence these outcomes (Liu, 2004). So, employees respond to favorable treatment by the organization with feelings of obligation to care about the organization’s welfare and to act in the organization’s behalf, which, in turn, enhance positive work attitudes and behaviors.

Findings show that there is a meaningful relationship between supervisor support and positive work attitudes. The trust of the supervisor and his/her behavior towards the employees leaves an impact on performance and attitude of employee towards the job (Valerius & Laura, 1998). Adams’ (1965) justice theory states that fair or unfair treatment has a significant impact on individual’s attitude and behavior.

According to social exchange theory, resources have been allocated to the subordinates by their supervisors based on the work done by the subordinates. In exchange, services are provided by the subordinates for enhancement of the productivity of the organization. A supervisor is likely to trust a subordinate when he/she has confidence in that subordinate to successfully perform a task at the same time as minimizing the risks of employees operating with self-interest at the cost of organizational goals. Thus it can be said that supervisors’ attitude toward subordinate is also influenced by subordinate’s reciprocated behavior. Supervisors generally trust those who have the ability to carry out tasks as requested by them.
where as subordinates are likely to give trust when communication issues surrounding interactional justice in regards to reward allocations (Werbel & Henriques, 2009). Low level of supervisor conscientiousness along with high level of supervisor trust, kindness, agreeableness, extraversion and emotional stability are directly related to employee job satisfaction, job commitment, satisfaction with supervisor, innovative attitude and turnover intentions (Smith & Canger, 2004). It is, therefore, not surprising that the provision of practical support by supervisors has a greater influence on work attitudes (Bliese & Castro 2000).

Therefore, it is expected that to enhance positive work attitudes in employees, it is needed to promote supervisor support via considering employees’ welfare, supporting their values and goals, increasing the internal motivation, and encouraging to participating in decisions.

Findings show that there is a meaningful relationship between justice and positive work attitudes. Justice is important in relation to work attitudes and self-reported behavior (Fischer, 2003), and a strong influence over our satisfaction level is how fairly we are treated. People pay attention to the fairness of company policies and procedures, fair and kind treatment from supervisors, and fairness of their pay and other rewards they receive from the company (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). Hossam (2009) reported the evidence for the mediating impact of distributive justice on the job characteristics-work outcomes relationship. Also, procedural justice affects performance as a result of its impact on employee attitudes (Karriker & Williams, 2009). This show justice within organizations could influence on employees’ attitudes positively. Therefore, it is expected that to enhance positive work attitudes in employees, it is needed to promote justice via distribution the equity resources among employees and forgiveness their errors.

Findings show that there is a meaningful relationship between organizational rewards and positive work attitudes. Lincoln and Kalleberg (1990) have argued that the rewards offered by an organization may have a powerful effect on employees’ attitudes towards their job and the company for which they work. In this context, it is important to distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Intrinsic rewards are those that exist in the job itself, such as variety, challenge, and autonomy. Extrinsic rewards, on the other hand, comprise elements such as pay and fringe benefits, promotion or advancement opportunities within the organization, the social climate, and physical working conditions.

The direct effects of reward system on attitudes are proved (lena & pohkam, 2006). A study presents some data from employees in the US, UK, New Zealand and Germany that investigates the impact of rewarding loyalty on work attitudes (Fischer, 2006). Therefore, it is expected that to enhance positive work attitudes in employees, it is needed to tend organizational rewards via recognizing employees’ attempts, improving their abilities, considering on pay by merit, giving rewards to employees’ success.

Findings show that there is a meaningful relationship between working conditions and positive work attitudes. MacMillan (1999) found that the workplace conditions positively affected satisfaction (Yurtseven & Halici, 2012), as a positive attitude. Another study shows that when employees do not satisfy working conditions, they have low performance (Gardner, et al. 2001). Mueller and Lawler (1996) extend the assumptions to the relationship between working conditions, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. They argue that working conditions regularly produce positive or negative emotions such as job satisfaction, and employees attempt to understand the contextual sources of such emotions. The organization (or a subunit of the organization) becomes a "target" for these feelings and the organization (or unit) viewed as responsible for positive emotions is most likely to elicit an affective attachment from the employee (Currivan, 2000).

The provision of working conditions has been shown to affect employee commitment and intention to stay with the organization, as well as levels of job satisfaction and the perception
of fairness of pay (Leblebici, 2012). According to Salami (2010), these outcomes are work attitudes.

Therefore, it is expected that to enhance positive work attitudes in employees, it is needed to improve working conditions via opportunities to promotion, take more responsibilities to eligible people, and tending to employees’ reasonable demand.

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.

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.

Employees’ perceptions toward organizational environment could influence on their attitude, motivation, performance, and healthy. Perceived organizational support is main important to change employees’ attitude in workplace. Therefore, it is suggested managers via to support employees, to render organizational appropriate rewards, to do justice and to focus working conditions influence on employees’ work positive attitudes.

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