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PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Brînduşa Maria Popa, University Lecturer, PhD

The Regional Department of Defense
Resources Management Studies /National Defense University of Romania "Carol I"/
Braşov / Romania

Abstract:

Employees who feel an emotional connection with the organization are more dedicated to their job. However, generally, such an attitude appears in response to how the employees perceive the organization's attitude towards them. The more they feel appreciated, respected, rewarded for their work, the more they will try to respect and accomplish the organizational standards and goals. The organizational support theory states that Perceived organizational support (POS) shows the degree to which employees trust the appreciation of their organization.

Key words: Perceived Organizational Support, performance, objectives, risk taking

Success is the ultimate goal of every organization, managers develop strategies to increase performance and to maintain their competitive advantage, but in order to attain performance certain prerequisites should be fulfilled. These prerequisites are not only of financial, material or human resources, they also include emotional resources. Even if, at a first view, such a statement may appear exaggerated, it should not be dismissed easily. For the employees to perform very well in their tasks, they should be involved and connected to the organization at a deeper, more emotional level because performance is the result of a „set of behaviours that is under individual's control and affects the organizational goals [1]”.

Perceived Organizational Support (POS), according to organizational support theory, refers to employees' perception concerning the extent to which the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being. POS has been found to have important consequences on employee performance and well-being [2].

1. Perceived organizational support and performance

The decision making process, even if it should be a very rational one, must not be conceived without taking into consideration the less objective factors like the emotional attachment of the employee towards the organization or the degree in which the employee perceives the organizational support. Employees who feel such an emotional connection are more dedicated to their job. However, generally, such an attitude appears in response to how the employees perceive the organization's attitude towards them. The more they feel appreciated, respected, rewarded for their work, the more they will try to respect and accomplish the organizational standards and goals. The organizational support theory states

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that Perceived organizational support (POS) shows the degree to which employees trust the appreciation of their organization

Such behavior is based on reciprocity, employees trade their “effort, loyalty and commitment to the organization for the tangible benefits and rewards that the organization can provide” [3]. Following the principle of action and reaction both parties involved will reciprocate positive treatment thus obtaining mutual benefits.

The relationship employer (organization) – employee is generally perceived as a personal one. Any favourable action will be more appreciated if it is seen as a sign of good will on the organization’s part than the result of an external constraint imposed by the legislation (such as a salary raise, a bonus etc.). Apparently, what we receive is better appreciated if it is seen as voluntary (based on choice and discretion) rather than something circumstantial (for example, the result of applying the legislation).

Perceived organizational support can function as an assurance that the organization will offer assistance in difficult work related situations and as an incentive for high work performance. Employees will try harder to comply with the decisions taken, they will feel greater obligation to support the organization towards reaching its goals thus, an increase in work performance.

The effective implementation of any organizational strategies depends on the communication between management and employees because it can reduce or eliminate uncertainty or fear regarding change and evolution. Employees perceive managers as agents of the organization [4] so, all their doings can be interpreted as putting into practice the organization’s intentions.

2.1 Perceived organizational support and decision making

There is a significant correlation between perceived organizational support and cooperation in decision making. The decision making process includes a series of activities carried out by the decision maker with regard to choosing the optimal course of action of all possible ones, actions which will be carried out by the members of the organization.

Preparing the decision requires identifying and defining the problem by taking into account the objectives set, the risks identified, the quality and quantity of information, the necessary resources and the existing ones.

The decision making involves a comparative analysis of all the options in order to into account the pros and cons of each course of action so that, in the end to be chosen the most advantageous alternative.

Applying the decision involves a series of organizational measures such as the establishment of dealing with tasks, establishing the responsibilities and skills of those involved in the activity, etc. It carries out practical activities as well as motivational activities: explaining and supporting the decision. The more engaged in the organization the employees feel, the harder they will try to accomplish their tasks.

Cooperation (in taking decision) connotes the sense of being involved in organizational activities such as taking decision by managers and supervisors in higher position. Allowing the voice of the employees in the decision making procedures helps increase their trust and dedication for attaining the organizational goals. Accuracy and consistency in the decision making process can be perceived as discretionary actions on the part of the organization and they strengthen their perceived organizational support.

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Perceiving the decision making process as being correct would increase their trust and therefore performance.

For the managerial process, taking a decision means choosing a course of action among several possible. This choice is a deliberate act of thinking, which aims at accomplishing the objectives by influencing the activity of an individual or group of individuals. Such influence is highly dependent on how the employee perceives the organization, the support and recognition it offers for the activity performed its members. POS is based on the experiences regarding the positive or negative impact and results of the policies, norms, procedures existing in the organization and the way they affect the employees. POS will influence organizational commitment, behavior and job performance. POS meets socio-emotional needs, provides assurance that help will be available when needed and indicate the organization's readiness to recompensate efforts made on its behalf [5]. Since perceived organizational support is built on the reciprocity norm, the way the decisions taken by the management are accepted and implemented by the employees reflects their relationship with the organization, how much they feel the obligation to repay the benefits received.

POS should enhance not only acceptance and dedication towards the organization, but also job performance and the number of actions performed that exceed the limits and responsibilities listed in the job description. The voluntary involvement in the organizational life should also increase.

POS clearly influences the engagement of the employee to the organization as we can see from the scheme below (Figure 1). An engaged employee will say positive words about the organization, will show intention to stay in the organization and will do everything possible to accomplish the tasks, will even show initiative to do more than the usual tasks. Engaged employees will work with more passion and will feel a deeper connection to their company.

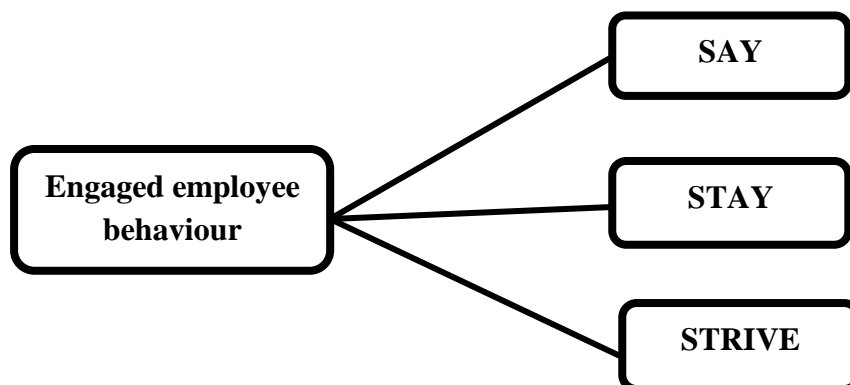


Fig. 1 Hewitt Engagement Measure

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2.2 POS and risk taking

Perceived organizational support (POS) is closely linked to trust or to lack of trust among subordinates and supervisors which, in turn, influences the approach to risk taking or no risk taking in the activity. Employee risk taking represents a willingness to face uncertainty and overcome mistakes as new ideas are explored, to take unconventional or unpopular positions, or dive into challenging problems without obvious solutions, in order to increase the likelihood of accomplishment.

All policy-makers want to know the size and nature of the risk posed by the choice of a particular course of action. The risk consists of two elements: the likelihood that the work will not develop as planned and the negative consequences of this. When undertaking a risk analysis there must be identified the possible threats and their level of materialization.

Employee risk-taking is clearly associated with greater trust among supervisors and subordinates, it involves actions having an uncertain outcome, but with potentially high returns. Employees with high levels of trust in the support provided by the organization safe in engaging in potential risks to benefit the organization without fear of negative consequences

This suggests that too little and too much risk taking are both dangerous for organizations' long-term welfare. There is no optimal degree of risk taking, but a very well structured decision making process could help forecast the outcomes of certain actions thus maintaining the degree of risk at a fairly reduced level.

Summing up, we can say that employees would be more willing to respond to high POS not only with harder and better work performance but also with higher propensity towards risk taking that will contribute to better results for the organization.

2. Conclusion

Perceived organizational support among managers and employees is related to increased performance and the development of employees' risk taking through trust that the organization will respond positively to failure. Employees who believe that the organization appreciates their contributions and cares about their prosperity and comfort are also more willing to take risks on behalf of the organization trusting the fact that the organization will recognize their own positive intent and dedication to the organization.

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