To Analyse the Perceived Organizational Support Post Downsizing

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ABSTRACT

This paper throws light on the perceived organizational support, the basic perception of the employees on the fact that how much organization supports them post downsizing. POS (Perceived Organizational Support) is the degree to which employees believe the organizational values and based on these values how organization supports them and take care about their well-being.Research shows that people perceive their organization as supportive when rewards are fair, when employees have a contribution in the organizational decisions, and when they see their supervisors as supportive. The organizational support plays the pivot role in shaping the growth chart of an organization. The employees give their best performance if they get full support and recognition from their organization.The questionnaire was distributed among the IT professionals to understand their perception on the organizational support post downsizing. The research type is qualitative research. The primary data has been used to draw the conclusions and the findings.

KEYWORDS: Perceived Organizational Support, Downsizing, Procedural Justice, Informational Justice, Distributive Justice, Interpersonal Justice.

INTRODUCTION

Perceived Organizational Support: Perceived Organizational Support (POS) is the degree to which employees believe the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being (for example, an employee believes his organization would accommodate him if he had a child care problem or would forgive an honest mistake on his part). Research shows that people perceive their organization as supportive when rewards are deemed fair, when employees have a voice in decisions, and when they see their supervisors as supportive. Employees with strong POS perceptions have been found more likely to have higher levels of organizational citizenship behaviours, lower levels of tardiness, and better customer services. The three common antecedents of perceived organizational support are fairness, supervisor support, and organizational rewards and favourable job condition.When employees perceive that they are receiving fair treatment in comparison to their co-workers, they perceive more support. The equity theory says that employees feel entitled to what they are given as workers based on their inputs to the job. Therefore, fairness can be perceived even if the rewards differ in size, based on employee rank. Fairness can also be described as procedural justice, or the fairness of happenings in the organization. The politics of the organization, or the promoting of self-interest, are often related to employees' perceptions of procedural justice. Sometimes, extrinsic motivation can mean more to an employee than intrinsic motivation because perceived appreciation has the power to turn a bitter employee into a content employee. Eisenberger and Rhoades discuss the many ways that employers can show appreciation and reward their employees. A few examples are paying their employees fairly; recognizing their

employees for new ideas, exceptional work, etc.; promoting their employees when they deserve it; providing job security as incentive to remain with the organization; encouraging autonomy to correspondingly increase production and morale; reduce stress when made aware of it; and to provide proper training, to ensure employees' confidence in their jobs.Some of these factors carry less weight than others do. Being autonomous increases an employee's desire to continue to remain loyal to his or her organization because if he feels competent and confident in his ability to do well, he will be less likely to give up or lose faith.

There are many possible consequences of POS discussed in Eisenberger and Rhoade's meta-analysis of studies done on POS. The first is organizational commitment. There are three kinds of organizational commitment: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Affective commitment, or feeling an emotional tie to one's organization, is important in employees because it demonstrates a deeper meaning for work than simply earning money. Continuance commitment, or knowing that staying with one's organization will be less costly in the end than leaving, is telling of extrinsic motivation to remain wherever one will profit the most. Normative commitment, or feeling compelled to stay because everyone else is, is less significant than the first two but is still considered to have an effect on employees. Some other consequences of POS include changes in withdrawal behaviour, the desire to remain, strains on employees, performance, job related affect, and job-related involvement. Levy also discusses absence rates, turnover, and counterproductive behaviours. Changes in these can result in undesired employee action.

There is a relationship between POS and Organizational Commitment. Usually, this relationship is an inverse one, meaning that if one is high, the other is low. However, there are circumstances in which both POS and OC can be high simultaneously. This generally happens because POS is usually related to the direct supervisor, whereas OC is with the company as a whole. Feelings about each can be separate. A few studies have shown that high levels of OC can have negative effects on POS. Other studies have shown that the level of an employer's organizational cynicism is not affected by the level of perceived organizational support.

POS can be positive if reciprocation of support and respect occurs between employer and employee. If the reciprocation does occur and the employee feels that he or she is being appreciated and respected for the work that he or she is doing, the POS is increased. If the respect and appreciation is either not present or is not expressed adequately, then the employee may begin to harbour suspicion, which may increase organizational cynicism. Organizational commitment may, at that point, be lessened; thus, jeopardizing the stability of the organization. Reciprocation can include a wide array of things, such as pleasing pay and benefits, a promotion, mutual respect between employer and employee, etc.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) 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 employee performance and well-being.

Research on perceived organizational support (POS) began with the observation that if managers are concerned with their employees' commitment to the organization, employees are focused on the organization's commitment to them (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986Organizational support theory (OST: Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Shore & Shore, 1995) holds that employees develop POS in order to meet needs for approval, esteem and affiliation, and to assess the benefits of increased work effort. POS increases employees' felt obligation to help the organization reach its objectives, their affective commitment to the organization, and their expectation that improved performance will be rewarded. Although there were relatively few studies of POS until the mid-1990′s, research on the topic has burgeoned in the last few years. Rhoades and Eisenberger's (2002) meta-analysis covered some 70 POS studies carried out through 1999, and the number now exceeds 700. Rhoades and Eisenberger and more recent meta-analyses (e.g., Kurtessis, Eisenberger, Ford, Buffardi, Stewart, &Adis, 2015) found clear and consistent relationships of POS with its predicted antecedents and consequences.

Information about assessing POS and downloadable articles are provided below. More information on POS can be obtained from recent book with Florence Stinglhamber entitled *Perceived organizational support: Fostering enthusiastic and productive employees. W*ashington, DC: American Psychological Association Books.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY/RESEARCH QUESTION

Why it is important to study the perceived organizational support post downsizing, what impression has the organization left on its survivors post downsizing , also it is important to understand whether the organization is concerned about the wellbeing of the survivors or not post downsizing as the growth of the organization now depends upon the survivor's perception and wellbeing,

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research on perceived organizational support (POS) began with the observation that if managers are concerned with their employees' commitment to the organization, employees are focused on the organization's commitment to them (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986Organizational support theory (OST: Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Shore & Shore, 1995) holds that employees develop POS in order to meet needs for approval, esteem and affiliation, and to assess the benefits of increased work effort. POS increases employees' felt obligation to help the organization reach its objectives, their affective commitment to the organization, and their expectation that improved performance will be rewarded. Behavioural outcomes of POS include increases in in-role and extra-role performance and decreases in withdrawal behaviours such as absenteeism and turnover.

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If a still shorter 8-item version of the scale is needed, another version selected from high loading items from the original SPOS may be used (please see the table below). This scale follows the recommendation of Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002, p. 699) that "Because the original scale is unidimensional and has high internal reliability, the use of shorter versions does not appear problematic. Prudence nevertheless dictates that both facets of the definition of POS (valuation of employees' contribution and care about employees' well-being) be represented in short versions of the questionnaire."

Here in my research I have used the shorter version of the scale i.e. 8-items seven pointlikert scale to capture the data and responses. The method of collecting the responses is both structured and unstructured. The questionnaire was mailed to the IT professionals and also their responses were taken through verbal discussion.

Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D. (1986). Perceived organizational support. Journal of Applied Psychology, 71, 500-507.
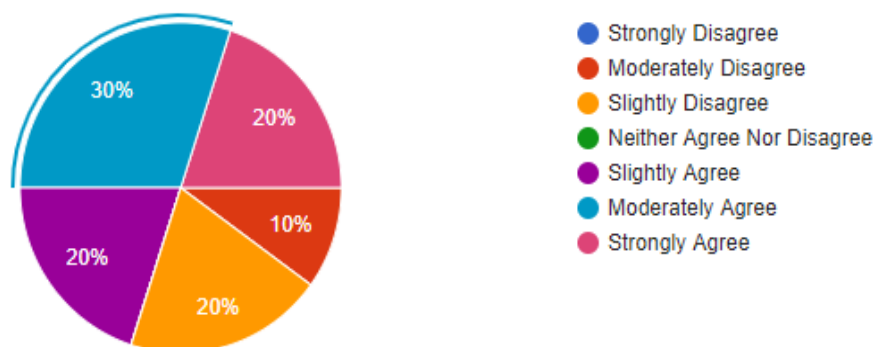
RESEARCH ANALYSIS

Figure: 1.1

1.The above-mentioned response was recorded for the question asked as: The organization values my contribution to its well-being.
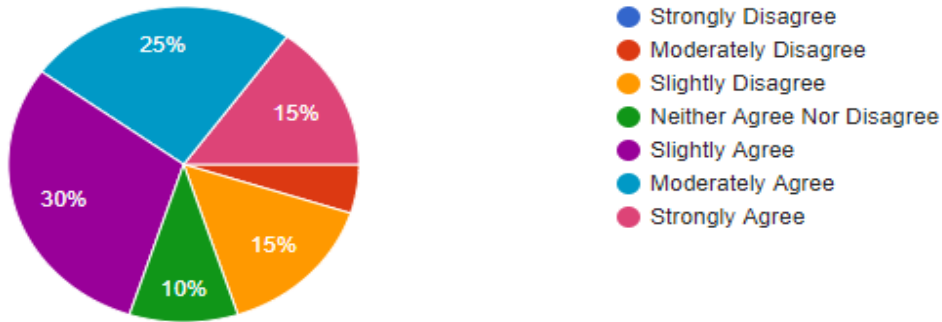
Figure:1.2

2.The figure 1.2 shows the response for the question asked that the organization appreciate extra effort from me.
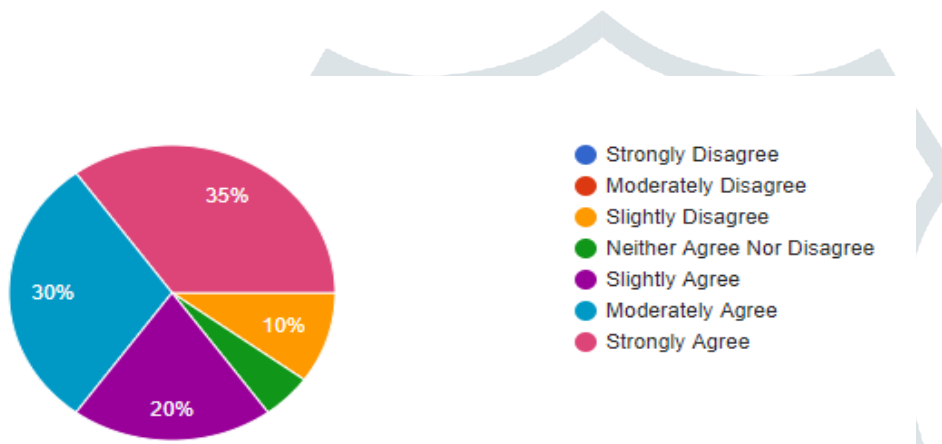

Figure:1.3

3.The figure 1.3 depicts the response for the questions asked:

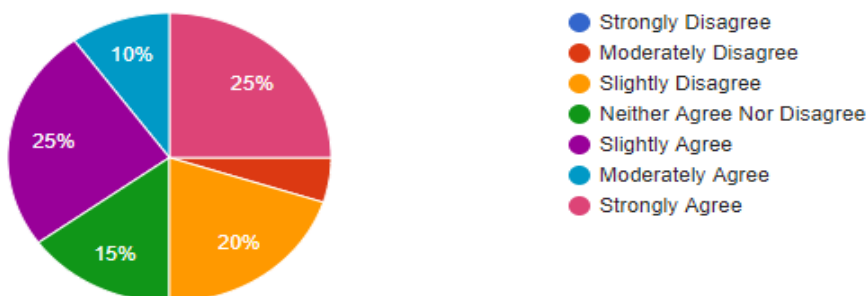"The organization would not ignore complaints from me".

Figure:1.4

4.The figure 1.4 shows the response for the questions asked: My organization cares about my well-being.

The primary data was collected and the analysis came out as that the organization is concerned about their employees post downsizing and is sensitive towards the survivors.

CONCLUSIONS

1. **Implement supportive workforce services that are discretionary—"Don't just do the things you are required to do.".**Favourable treatment received by employees from an organization can be of many different kinds, such as recognition for good work, opportunities for promotion and job security. However, such treatment does not necessarily translate into high POS. Employees understand that benefits received from the organization can arise from a variety of motives, not all of which are concerned with employees' welfare. Research found that when employees received favourable job conditions, POS was six times stronger if employees believed the organization had high control over the job conditions (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli& Lynch, 1997). Therefore, employee perceptions of favourable treatment associated with organizational free choice have a powerful influence on POS. Another example of how organizations can show employees that they value their contributions and care for their well-being in a discretionary way involves employee assistance program (EAP) services. It has been reported that two-thirds of medium-sized businesses offer EAP services, leaving a sizeable portion of businesses that do not. EAP services, such as professional counselling and behaviour intervention programs, are designed to help employees with personal problems that may adversely affect employee performance and well-being. Research involving case studies indicates that EAP services often improve occupational, social and psychological functioning (Jacobson, Jones & Bowers, 2011). Because EAP services are voluntarily undertaken by organizations, the implementation or upgrading of such services can effectively contribute to POS.

2. **Be fair and equitable in the making, monitoring and enforcement of all management practices.**Fair organizational procedures and policies yield major contributions to POS because such procedures and policies are often viewed as strongly under the control of the organization and central to employees' long-term interests (Kurtessis et al., 2015; Moorman, Blakely &Niehoff, 1998). In this way, organizations that treat their employees fairly and equitably convey a sense of concern for their well-being. As a result, as shown by a great deal of evidence, fair treatment is among the strongest drivers of POS (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

   Types of fair treatment include: (1) procedural justice ,which involves the fairness of processes used to determine how resources such as pay, promotions and job assignments are distributed; (2) distributive justice, which concerns the fairness of the outcomes themselves; (3) interpersonal justice, which involves the fairness in the treatment of employees, such as with respect and dignity; and (4) informational justice, which involves the provision of necessary job-related information (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter & Ng, 2001).

Figure:1.5

3.Set achievable goals and reward proportionately.

Appropriate rewards and recognition for the achievement of high performance are strong drivers of POS. When rewards and recognition for high performance are appropriately provided, organizations promote an environment that employees can *expect* to gain rewards for high performance. This expectation indicates that the organization values employee contributions and, thus, not only increases employees' willingness to perform at a high level but also serves to enhance their POS (Eisenberger, Rhoades & Cameron, 1999). However, it is important to note that todevelop and maintain employee expectations that high performance will be appropriately acknowledged, rewards and recognition should be provided for achievable high performance. That is, some organizations place unrealistic demands regarding high performance, thus leading to increased employee stress and decreased self-efficacy and, in turn, lower POS. Accordingly, rewards and recognition should be based on reasonable expectations concerning what employees can achieve given their current circumstances

Figure: 1.6

4. **Offer individualized benefits—"Learn and provide the type of support your workers and workforce needs."** Benefits that are tailored to employees' individual needs more strongly convey the organization's positive valuation of employees (Gouldner, 1960). Research found that the perceived usefulness of benefits designed to help employees balance their work and family responsibilities was positively related to POS (Lambert, 2000). This example demonstrates how organizations can increase POS by accommodating the specific needs of their employees. However, providing selective opportunities to some employees at the expense of other employees may create resentment among those left out. Therefore, organizations should attempt to provide benefits that will meet the specific needs of a considerable diversity of employees. Targeting benefits to the specific needs of an organization's workforce is a step in the right direction to increasing employee POS.

5. **Support supervisors so they will foster POS in their subordinates.** Supervisors, who act as representatives of the organization responsible for directing, evaluating and coaching subordinates, play a key role in seeing that the goals and objectives of higher management are effectively implemented. Supervisors have been found to repay the organization for their own POS by carrying out their jobs more effectively, including more supportive supervision of subordinates. In turn, subordinates who feel supported by their supervisor's report increased POS and engage in more voluntary behaviours helpful to the organization (Shanock& Eisenberger, 2006). Therefore, treating supervisors favourably increases their POS and, importantly, this can cascade down to subordinates.

6. **Train subordinates to be supportive.** Because supervisors have more power over subordinates than subordinates have over supervisors, most leadership research neglects the possible influence of followers as a group over their supervisor. Considering that subordinates contribute to their supervisors' objectives and emotional needs, supervisors form a general view concerning their valuation by subordinates
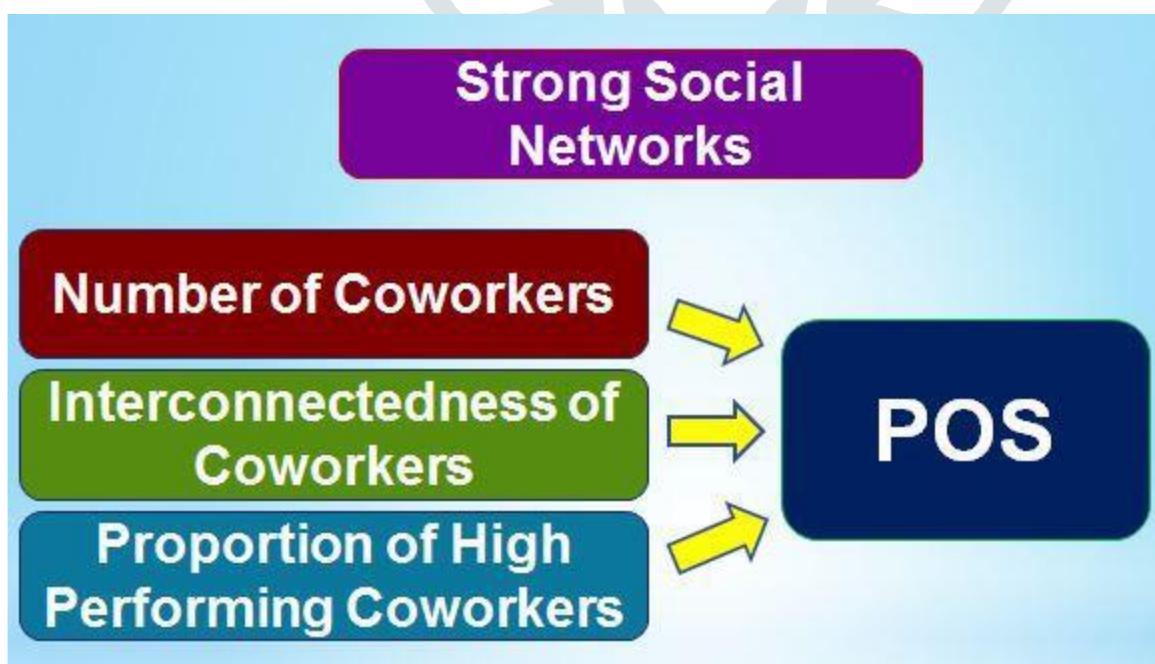

Figure: 1.7

Implement supportive workforce services that are discretionary— "Don't just do the things you are required to do."

- ➢ Be fair and equitable in the making, monitoring and enforcement of all management practices.
- ➢ Set achievable goals and reward proportionately.
- ➢ Offer individualized benefits— "Learn and provide the type of support your workers and workforce needs."
- ➢ Support supervisors so they will foster POS in their subordinates.
- ➢ Train subordinates to be supportive.
- ➢ Promote strong social networks.
- ➢ Begin organizational support prior to the start of employment

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