

Examining the Relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Career Success: A Comprehensive Review

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Abstract

This study explores the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee career success, a critical area in today's rapidly evolving workplace. With economic globalization and technological advancements, career success has become a key focus for both employees and organizations, significantly impacting individual development and organizational innovation. Perceived organizational support plays a vital role in enhancing career success by improving skills, expanding networks, and fostering psychological safety, while also increasing job satisfaction and reducing turnover intentions. However, gaps remain in understanding how these mechanisms operate and how organizations can effectively leverage support to drive employee success. Addressing this gap is crucial for developing actionable human resource strategies that align employee growth with organizational objectives, making this research both timely and necessary.

Keywords: Perceived Organizational Support, Career Success, Career Calling, Work Engagement, Job Satisfaction

Research Background

In the context of rapid social change and increasing competition, employee career success not only affects the quality of individual career development but also profoundly influences an organization's innovation capabilities and growth potential. Weston et al. (2020)

emphasize that career success is not merely a result of promotions or salary increases; it encompasses personal skill development, career satisfaction, and optimistic expectations for the future. Career success is crucial both for individuals and organizations. For individuals, achieving career success signifies the realization of their potential, fulfillment of growth needs, and attainment of self-worth. For organizations, when employees achieve career success, it indicates effective human resource development within the organization, ultimately contributing to overall organizational success (Crisan, 2021).

In recent years, with the evolving workplace environment and increasing personal career aspirations, promoting employee career success has become a critical topic in human resource management and organizational behavior research (Giancaspro et al., 2021). Indeed, studies have shown that employee career success is closely linked to the sense of support provided by organizations. Perceived organizational support (POS) is a key predictor of career success because it directly influences employees' work attitudes, engagement, and loyalty (Eisenberger et al., 2019; Maan et al., 2020). Numerous studies, both domestic and international, have demonstrated the multifaceted positive impacts of POS on employee career success. Organizations can foster this support by offering development opportunities, recognizing and addressing employees' interests, rewarding their achievements, and acknowledging their contributions. Such actions make employees feel valued and integral to the company. The perceived organizational support thus significantly enhances job satisfaction and career development (Mascarenhas et al., 2022). Furthermore, scholars emphasize that employees with higher levels of POS exhibit stronger work motivation and are willing to invest more effort, leading to significant improvements in job satisfaction (Hao & Yang, 2023). Therefore, understanding the relationship between POS and employee career success is crucial for developing effective management strategies.

In summary, this study aims to investigate the relationship between perceived organizational support (POS) and employee career success, as well as whether career calling mediates this relationship. We systematically collected, analyzed, and synthesized existing literature to uncover the intrinsic connections and their impacts on both organizations and employees. Our goal is to fill gaps in current research and provide targeted directions for future studies, delving deeper into this important perspective to better understand how POS influences employee career success. Through this research, we aim to offer more actionable management recommendations to organizations while advancing academic understanding of this field. This effort will help develop more effective employee management strategies, fostering employee career growth and ultimately promoting the long-term stability and sustainable development of organizations.

Research Questions

Does perceived organizational support (POS) have a significant relationship with employee career success?

Does career calling mediate the relationship between POS and employee career success?

Research Significance

Theoretical Significance: Through a systematic review and synthesis of existing literature, this study explores the mechanisms through which perceived organizational support (POS) influences employee career success. It constructs a theoretical framework

suggesting that POS facilitates career success by enhancing professional skills, expanding interpersonal networks, fostering psychological safety, and improving job satisfaction. This framework offers a fresh perspective on the theoretical advancements in organizational behavior and career development, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of how organizational support shapes employee growth and long-term success. By bridging gaps in the literature, the study provides a solid foundation for future research to explore under-investigated aspects of POS and its implications for both employees and organizations.

Practical Significance: This study underscores the critical role of perceived organizational support in promoting employee career success and provides actionable insights for organizational practices. Research findings demonstrate that POS not only enhances employees' career development by fostering a positive and supportive work environment but also improves job satisfaction, strengthens employee retention, and aligns individual goals with organizational objectives. By leveraging POS, organizations can implement targeted strategies to nurture talent, reduce turnover intentions, and drive innovation, achieving sustainable growth. This study serves as a valuable resource for practitioners seeking to design and implement HR policies that not only help employees achieve career success but also drive organizational competitiveness and long-term sustainability.

Research Methodology

To address the specific research questions, this study utilized a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology. SLR emphasizes rigorous scientific protocols and transparency, enabling other researchers to replicate and validate the findings. This approach has gained increasing attention and recognition in business and management research over recent years (Paul et al., 2021; Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017). Following the guidelines set by Tranfield et al. (2003), we conducted systematic searches and gathered relevant literature from databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, adhering to established research practices.

The literature review results pertinent to our research topic are synthesized in the grid chart below. This chart aims to comprehensively integrate and present the key findings from prior studies, providing readers with a clear overview of the research landscape and enhancing their understanding of the existing knowledge framework.

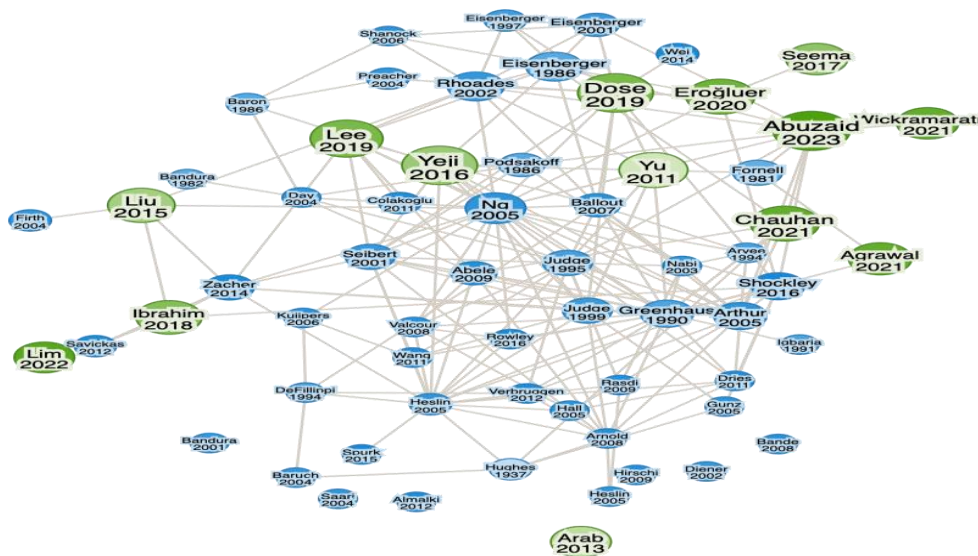


Figure 1.1: Academic Network Diagram of Perceived Organizational Support and Career Success research.

Source: Research Rabbit (2024)

To explore the relationship between perceived organizational support and career success, this study conducted a review of relevant literature spanning the past two decades. In the initial screening phase, materials that did not align with the research focus were excluded. A total of 14 papers meeting the inclusion criteria were ultimately selected for detailed analysis.

These selected papers encompass studies on related variables published in business journals over the last 20 years. Throughout the literature search, no geographical restrictions were applied, ensuring a comprehensive review of the available research.

Table 1.1
Overview of Job Crafting and Intention to Leave

Item	Publication Year	Author	Title
1	2011	Yu	Chinese Knowledge Employees' Career Values, Perceived Organizational Support and Career Success
2	2013	Arab et al.	Career Success: The effects of career anchor-job fit, psychological contract fulfillment and Perceived organizational support on career success
3	2015	Liu et al.	The Relationships Among Perceived Organizational Support, Intention to Remain, Career Success and Self-esteem in Chinese Male Nurses
4	2016	Kang Yeji et al.	The Effect of Perceived Organizational Support on Subjective Career Success: The Mediating Effect of Career Planning

5	2017	Seema & Sujatha	Perceived organisational support on career success: an employee perspective - an empirical study from an Indian context
6	2018	Ibrahim & Amari	Influence of the Psychological Capital and Perceived Organizational Support on Subjective Career Success: The Mediating Role of Women's Career Adaptability in the Saudi Context
7	2018	Lee & Lee	Mediating effects of the meaningfulness of work between organizational support and subjective career success
8	2019	Dose et al.	Effects of Perceived Organizational Support on Objective and Subjective Career Success via Need Satisfaction: A Study Among French Psychologists
9	2020	Erođluer et al.	The Mediating Effect of Subjective Career Success in the Impact of Perceived Organizational Support on the Intention to Remain
10	2021	Agrawal & Singh	Predictors of subjective career success amongst women employees: moderating role of perceived organizational support and marital status
11	2021	Chauhan et al.	Career Success of Women: Role of Family Responsibilities, Mentoring, and Perceived Organizational Support
12	2021	Wickramaratne	Role of Career Oriented Perceived Organizational Support in Determining Subjective Career Success of Supervisory Level Managers in Manufacturing Firms
13	2022	Lim & Yu	The Moderated Mediating Effect of Perceived Supervisory Support in the Relationship Between Career Aspirations, Career Commitment and Career Success of Female Middle Managers
14	2023	Abuzaid	Examining the Influence of Perceived Organizational Support on Career Success: An Analysis of the Mediating Role of Work Engagement.

Research Content

Research on Perceived Organizational Support

The concept of perceived organizational support (POS) was initially introduced by Eisenberger et al. (1986), referring to the extent to which employees feel supported by their organization, specifically their perception of the organization's concern for their contributions and well-being. Since then, numerous scholars have delved into this concept. Guzzo et al. (1994) expanded on POS from the perspective of the psychological contract, viewing it as the part of the contract that represents the organization's responsibilities toward its employees. This perspective not only addressed the previous research limitation of focusing solely on employees' commitment to the organization but also emphasized the organization's responsibility towards its employees, fostering mutual interaction and support. McMillian (1997) identified additional components of POS beyond respect and emotional support, including instrumental support such as training, information services, and necessary equipment provided by the organization to enhance members' competitiveness. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) expanded on the contextual dimensions of perceived organizational

support (POS), positing that it encompasses the changes in the organization's attitude as perceived by employees in various situations, along with the degree to which the organization values individual contributions. By addressing this aspect, their work filled a significant gap in prior research, thereby enhancing our understanding of POS. In summary, scholars have continuously refined and developed the concept of POS, gradually reaching a consensus: POS refers to employees' perceptions of how the organization views their contributions and cares about their interests at various stages of their careers. This consensus builds upon the initial definition by Eisenberger et al. (1986), but has been expanded through subsequent research, becoming more comprehensive and specific.

Many researchers have explored the antecedent variables influencing perceived organizational support (POS), which can be categorized into organizational-level and individual-level factors. At the organizational level, factors such as supervisor support, organizational justice, compensation, and working conditions positively impact POS (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Ahmed and Nawaz (2015) also highlighted that organizational fairness, growth opportunities, supervisor support, and peer support significantly influence POS. Notably, the strength of POS significantly affects employees' time and effort investment in their work, as well as their job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Furthermore, studies indicate that managerial leadership styles and the quality of leader-member exchange (LMX) significantly affect employees' perception of organizational support (Wayne et al., 1997). For instance, high-quality LMX relationships provide subordinates with important and appropriate resources, making employees feel valued by the organization (Zhang et al., 2019). Specifically, supervisor support has a direct positive effect on POS, and favorable working conditions can enhance employees' sense of organizational support, leading to better organizational outcomes (Armstrong-Stassen & Schlosser, 2010). From an individual perspective, demographic variables such as gender, age, education level, and position significantly influence POS (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Chen et al. (2017) further revealed that individual personality traits, such as agreeableness and openness from the Big Five personality dimensions, can also significantly predict POS. Additionally, Kurtessis et al. (2017) found through empirical research that when employees' values align with those of the organization, it significantly and positively predicts their POS. Sun (2019) also noted that employees' traditional values and positive emotions are closely related to POS. In other words, the higher the consistency between individual and organizational values, the stronger the POS felt by employees; conversely, if there is a mismatch, employees may face greater challenges in communication and collaboration.

Furthermore, numerous studies have shown that perceived organizational support (POS) has a significant positive correlation with employees' work engagement, turnover intentions, job satisfaction (Cropanzano et al., 2003), and career success (Ballout, 2007; Ng et al., 2005). Shore and Tetrick (1991) noted that when employees perceive higher levels of organizational support, they tend to work more proactively, exhibit behaviors and attitudes conducive to organizational development, and seek to reciprocate the organization's recognition and support through superior performance. Research by George and Brief (1992) indicates that employees with high POS are more likely to display high levels of organizational citizenship behavior, such as actively contributing suggestions, enhancing personal skills, improving performance, and showing concern for the organization's development. Scott et al. (2014) found that employees with high POS typically exhibit higher job performance and a

stronger sense of self-worth. Caesens et al. (2015) argued that POS is positively correlated with forward-looking, organizationally beneficial behaviors but not in the reverse direction. Zhong et al. (2015) proposed an indirect relationship between employees' POS and high performance. Demoulin et al. (2016) demonstrated that selecting members with high POS can lead to favorable organizational outcomes. Moreover, POS positively influences employees' organizational identification and job satisfaction, fostering a stronger sense of ownership among these employees.

In summary, scholars have approached the topic from various angles, conducting in-depth analyses of the factors influencing perceived organizational support (POS). Their research reveals how these factors collectively shape employees' perceptions of organizational support. This multi-dimensional understanding helps us grasp the mechanisms underlying the formation of POS more comprehensively and provides a theoretical foundation for enhancing employees' POS. Moreover, to gain employees' recognition and active participation, organizations need to offer greater care and support rather than merely demanding loyalty and commitment unilaterally. Therefore, in the field of organizational behavior, POS has consistently been regarded as a crucial perspective for understanding employee work behaviors and attitudes.

Research on Career Success

In their 1982 book *Managing Careers*, London and Stumpf defined career success as the accumulation of work-related and career-related positive outcomes or achievements that employees experience throughout their careers. As societal emphasis on career development has grown, researchers both domestically and internationally have delved deeper into this field, defining and studying career success from various perspectives. Career success criteria can primarily be divided into subjective and objective dimensions. Hunt et al. (1986), based on individual intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, introduced the concepts of subjective and objective career success. Objective career success is typically measured by concrete external indicators such as economic rewards and promotions (Judge et al., 1995), which are evaluated by others. Subjective career success, on the other hand, depends on personal feelings and satisfaction, such as whether expectations regarding salary and personal development opportunities are met (Arthur et al., 2005); these evaluations are self-assessed by the individual. Research indicates that subjective and objective career success are interdependent and interconnected (Abele & Spurk, 2009). These two dimensions do not exist in isolation but rather complement each other, jointly influencing an individual's career experience and development.

The drivers of career success involve both individual differences and influences at the organizational level. Early research on career success primarily focused on psychological aspects, thus concentrating more on individual variables. For example, demographic factors such as age, personality traits, and gender have played a significant role in predicting and explaining career success (Ng et al., 2005). Recent studies indicate that human capital can predict subjective career success, while stable personality traits significantly influence objective career success (Spurk et al., 2019). As sociology and management have placed greater emphasis on career success, the research perspective has expanded to include organizational and team levels. The organizational environment significantly impacts career success (Tharenou, 1994), and organizations themselves can serve as predictors of

employees' career success (Judge et al., 1995). Additionally, there is a significant positive correlation between organizational career management and individual career success (Orpen, 1994). Career assistance, internal support, and on-the-job education positively affect employees' salaries (Ng et al., 2005). The alignment between individuals and their organizations not only predicts career success (Guo et al., 2014) but also enhances career capabilities, job satisfaction, and the achievement of career goals, thereby exerting a significant positive impact on all dimensions of career success.

Furthermore, Spurk et al. (2019) found that employees who experience career success typically enjoy higher levels of well-being and job satisfaction and exhibit lower turnover intentions. Scholars argue that career success not only improves work quality and performance but also enhances overall organizational performance (Zhang et al., 2022; Wu et al., 2021). Therefore, identifying the predictors of career success is crucial for personal career development and quality of life.

Research on the Relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Career Success

Scholars generally agree that organizational support at different levels can significantly influence employees' career success. Dreher and Ash (1990) emphasized the critical role of support from top management in career development, noting that guidance and resources provided by senior staff play a crucial part in advancing employees' careers. Ng et al. (2005) further highlighted that in the sponsorship mobility model, organizational support and sociodemographic factors are the most commonly used predictors. These predictors include career support, supervisor support, opportunities for training and skill development, as well as organizational resources (such as organizational size), all of which positively impact employees' career success.

Eisenberger et al. (1986) linked perceived organizational support directly to job satisfaction, finding that employees with high job satisfaction are more willing to put in extra effort to help the organization achieve its goals, thereby promoting their career success. In contrast, employees with low job satisfaction may lack this motivation. Therefore, organizational support not only enhances job satisfaction but also strengthens employees' perception of career success. This indicates a close relationship between organizational support and career success (Ng et al., 2005). These research findings provide a solid theoretical foundation for exploring the relationship between perceived organizational support and career success.

The Role of Career Calling in Perceived Organizational Support and Career Success

Dobrow and Tosti-Kharas (2011) defined career calling from an organizational behavior perspective as a subjective experience where individuals feel a strong sense of meaning in a particular domain. When individuals perceive this calling, they typically approach their work with higher motivation, exhibit greater job engagement and satisfaction (Duffy & Dik, 2013), and have lower turnover intentions (Duffy et al., 2011; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Academic research has shown a significant positive correlation between holding a career calling and career success (Wrzesniewski, 1997; Steger et al., 2013; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010; Dobrow, 2011). Moreover, career calling is considered one of the key determinants of career

success (Thompson & Bunderson, 2019), and Hirschi (2012) emphasized the association between career calling and positive career development outcomes.

Chen et al. (2023) found in their study on the mediating role of career calling between perceived organizational support and job burnout that high levels of perceived organizational support can enhance affective commitment, stimulate a sense of work responsibility and career calling. This calling further increases employees' perception of meaning in their work, improves job satisfaction, and helps them cope more effectively with work stress, thereby reducing job burnout and facilitating career success (Ehrhardt & Ensher, 2020). Cui and Su (2023), through a meta-analysis of 116 empirical studies, discovered that career calling has a positive impact on organizational commitment (DiRenzo et al., 2021), work engagement (Sawhney et al., 2019), and job satisfaction (Zhang & Hirschi, 2021), particularly in promoting individual work attitudes and the sense of life's meaning (DiRenzo et al., 2021). Huang et al. (2019) also noted that career calling partially mediates the relationship between organizational support and work engagement.

Limitation

In examining the impact of perceived organizational support (POS) on employee career success, this review has several limitations. Firstly, selecting literature within a specific time frame may have led to the omission of important studies from the past or future, thereby limiting a comprehensive understanding of the field's evolving trends. Secondly, although efforts were made to include multi-language literature, the selection of documents limited to certain languages and regions might have overlooked significant research from other linguistic or geographic contexts. Lastly, while this study focuses on the relationship between POS and career success, it does not encompass all related materials; other pertinent literature may not have been included, which constitutes a potential limitation. Given these limitations, it is recommended that future scholars broaden the time range and expand the time span of literature searches to more comprehensively capture the historical development and future trends in this field; secondly, incorporate diverse literature covering studies from different linguistic and regional backgrounds to ensure the completeness of a global perspective. Furthermore, increase methodological transparency by meticulously documenting research methods and criteria for literature selection so that other researchers can replicate and validate the results. Finally, engage in interdisciplinary research to integrate perspectives from multiple disciplines, exploring the broader impacts of perceived organizational support on employee career success.

Despite these limitations, this study provides an in-depth analysis of the various factors influencing perceived organizational support (POS) and delves into the relationship between organizational support and career success. This literature review aims to offer a comprehensive overview of the relationship between POS and career success based on existing research. Additionally, this study enriches the research framework for human resource management and practice, aiding business managers in understanding that employees' career success not only impacts individual career development but also has profound implications for organizational growth and innovation capabilities. Therefore, strengthening POS is not only a critical component of corporate human resource management strategies but also a key pathway to enhancing employee career success.

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