A Review of Perceived Organizational Support

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Abstract. This paper is a review of perceived organizational support (POS), which is firstly proposed by Eisenberger based on the social exchange theory and the reciprocity principle. Through a detailed review of the theoretical basis, definition, antecedents and consequences of POS, it is recommended that there is still space for research in this field, and interested scholars can do more research to investigate this topic.

1. Introduction
"Employee-organization relationship" is an important topic in the area of organizational behavior. The concept of "organizational commitment" is often used to convey bottom-up promises within the organization, describing employee-organization relationships from an employee perspective. However, a one-way description of the employee's attitude toward the organization is not sufficient to completely cover the employee-organization relationship. Based on social exchange theory, employees contribute to the organization in order to exchange remunerations and rewards given by the organization to the employees, organize "positive treatment" of employees, and exchange staff’s positive attitude, emotion and behavior toward the organization. Organizational support helps to meet the needs of the organization and helps express the organization's willingness to provide material and other support to its employees. According to the law of reciprocity, people give help to those who help themselves. If the employee perceives "positive treatment" (remuneration, promotion, support, etc.) of the organization, the employee will show a positive organizational attitude and behavior in return.

2. The theoretical basis of perceived organizational support
The theoretical basis of organizational support theory is social exchange theory and reciprocity principle[1]. Blau defines social exchange as an obligation not specified in advance, and the individual's "positive treatment" of others is expected to pay off in the future. Future Returns Based on the individual's trust in the other party, trust each other's obligations in the long run. Social exchange theory is often compared to the theory of economic exchange and there are differences between the two. Social exchange is based on moral obligations, while economic exchange is based on economic and legal obligations. In social exchange, the value of the return is not predetermined, and in economic exchange the value of the return is predetermined before the exchange. Although social exchange does not regulate the behavior of the other party on the basis of contractual constraints, as economic exchange does, the party that accepts the "active treatment" can still change the exchange relationship between the two parties if it fails to fulfill its obligation of return.

Therefore, the core idea of social exchange theory is "reciprocity". Based on the principle of reciprocity, individuals have the responsibility and obligation to actively respond to the positive treatment of the other party. When an individual accepts the "positive treatment" of others, it naturally generates the psychological pressure and sense of obligation to pay off, thus generating an attitude or behavior of retribution to the one given.

The social exchange theory is applied to the organizational context, organizational support theory came into being[2]. Organizational support theory emphasizes that organizations should identify the needs of their employees and do their best to meet the needs of their employees so that they are aware
of employers' support. This is the so-called "reciprocity" between employees and organizations. Therefore, Eisenberger et al. referred to the social exchange within the organization as "the social exchange explanation of organizational commitment." When employees perceive strong organizational support, they generate a sense of obligation to pay off, reward organizational commitment to a higher level of organization, job satisfaction, hard work, and organizational performance. Organizational support theory enables managers to shift their focus from employees to organizations and believes that the primary prerequisite for enhancing employees' commitment to the organization should be to enhance employee-perceived "employer commitment" to employees.

3. Definition of perceived organizational support

The theory of organizational support was proposed by American social psychologist Eisenberger in 1986. The theory of social support is based on the theory of social exchange and the principle of reciprocity. Once this theory is put forward, it promptly draws attention. Among them, the core of organizational support theory is the concept of "organizational support"[3]. Eisenberger believes that employees should be effectively motivated from the perspective of their motivation and needs. Employees' behavior in the organization is constrained and limited by organizational norms and the reason they work for the organization due to the expectation of "rewards" from the organization. Therefore, the interaction between staff and organization is always based on the "expectations" and "needs" of each other. Eisenberger believes that meeting the needs of employees helps to generate effective incentives. The needs of employees at work come from the "expectation" of the organization, including the needs of social emotions. From the above point of view, Eisenberger defines organizational support as: "Employees feel motivated and work hard when they feel they are coming to the organization for their support, care and approval." The concept of organizational support includes two main points: First, the organization's emphasis on employee efforts and contributions, reflecting the employees have been recognized by the organization's needs; Second, the organization attaches importance to employee well-being, reflecting the expectations of employees to organize their own "Social emotional needs."

McMillin supplemented the concept proposed by Eisenberger that organizational support should include, in addition to the organization's concern and respect for employees, tool support such as equipment, information, personnel, etc., necessary for the job Staff work better, he proposed organizational support is composed of social emotional support and tool support system as a whole, the theory of organizational support to expand the two-dimensional[4].

Domestic scholars Ling Wenshuan, Yang Haijun, Fang Lilu in the context of Chinese culture, the use of Maslow's demand theory to organize the important needs of employees classified as three: the material needs, organizational respect and recognition, sense of accomplishment and self-realization. These three types of needs require the organization's support for its work, its value recognition and its material interests, which are also three major aspects of the sense of organizational support.

Consciousness of organizational support is easily confused with similar constructs, such as psychological contracts. Studies have shown that organizational support is an independent concept, both with the psychological contract, but also with a clear distinction. Psychological contract and organizational support both apply social exchange theory to the organizational context and discuss the social exchange between employees and employers. The consistency between psychological contract and organizational support lies in that both are based on the theory of social exchange and the principle of reciprocity as the explanation mechanism for the outcome variables (attitudinal and behavioral variables). However, the sense of organizational support emphasizes the organization's commitment to employees and is therefore unilateral. On the contrary, the psychological contract focuses on the continual relationship between staff and employer's perspective and represents the perception of employees and employers on reciprocal obligations.
4. Structure and measurement of perceived organizational support

The earliest researcher who studied the dimension of organizational support was Eisenberger, who pointed out through his research that support is a one-dimensional construct and that he developed a tissue support measures scale. And for the overall concept of organizational support to develop a corresponding measurement scale, the scale a total of 36 items. After factor analysis, we found that the scale supports single-dimensional conception and has good reliability. This scale is the most widely used measure of tissue support in subsequent studies. However, in the specific application, follow-up researchers often choose from 36 items to select a higher factor load constitute a separate scale to make the study more convenient. It also reflects that the scale of 36 items developed by Eisenberger (1986) has a high internal validity and a good one-dimensional character.

Scholars at home and abroad have made some amendments to their scales and have produced many different versions of the organizational support measurement questionnaire. Among them, McMillin improved his questionnaire, proposed a mixed model of organizational support, increased emotional and instrumental support of these two dimensions, such as the organization's respect for employees, the value of the recognition of the organization of the staff emotional support. And support such as information, people, resources is instrumental support, it can help members to complete the work smoothly. Multidimensional perspectives of organizational support are recognized by other scholars. Bhan and Thumnavin argue that organizational support includes emotional support, information support, and organizational support in three dimensions. Kraimer et al. divided the sense of organizational support into the three dimensions of development support, financial support, and adaptive support in the process of organizing the sense of organizational support for expatriates. The scale has 12 items in total.

Domestic scholars also hold more rich discussions on the multi-dimensional issues of organizational support. Such as: Bao Gong Min, Liu Xiao will be divided into three dimensions of organizational support, these three dimensions are from the organizational system, leadership, colleagues in three different areas of support. Ling et al. used the six-point rating method to develop an organizational support scale that includes three dimensions and 24 items, and obtained high reliability and validity indicators.

5. Antecedents of perceived organizational support

A large number of antecedents affect organizational support can be summarized as organizational factors, individual factors, organizational or organizational relationship between agents and employees three categories. Among them, the organizational factors include organizational fairness, working conditions, organizational political activities, organizational size, specific cultural factors (such as caring for disadvantaged employees and employees and relatives). Individual factors include values, positive / negative emotions, pre-hiring experience, work status and other variables. Organizational or organizational relationship between agents and employees, including psychological contract, matching people and organizations, leading members of the exchange, management communication, leadership style and other variables.

6. Consequences of perceived organizational support

Relatively speaking, the research on organizational supportiveness outcome variables is relatively abundant. According to Rhoades and Eisenberger, outcome variables of organizational support include organizational commitment, job involvement, job-related feelings, performance, fatigue, expectations of stay in the organization, and withdrawal behavior. Among them, the sense of organizational support is stronger on the prediction of organizational commitment and less on the prediction of attitude and behavior variables related to turnover. Chen et al. discussed the predictive effect of organizational support on positive variables such as organizational commitment and organizational citizenship. The results show that organizational support has a positive predictive
effect on organizational commitment and organizational citizenship, and organizational trust and organizational support for safety play an intermediary role. This shows that organizational support for the outcome of the variables, both on the staff attitude level variables, but also on employee behavior level variables[7].

References


