A Multi-Source Model of Perceived Organizational Support and Performance

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This field study asks three questions concerning perceived organizational support (POS): 1) Does support from stakeholders such as direct reports predict POS?, 2) Does an additive model of support stemming from supervisors (PSS), coworkers (PCS), and direct reports/internal customers (DRS) predict POS better than the individual support variables?, and 3) Does POS predict counterproductive work behaviors (CWB)? Results (n=154) indicate strong relationships among all support variables, but only PCS and PSS predict POS. Findings also indicate POS is a strong predictor of both in-role and extra-role performance, as well as counterproductive work behaviors. Practical and theoretical implications are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Employee dedication and commitment to the organization is highly valued by employers and has been given a great deal of attention in research (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). Emotionally committed employees tend to exhibit behaviors that benefit organizations such as enhanced performance, reduced withdrawal behaviors such as absenteeism and tardiness, and more prosocial behaviors such as helping and cooperating (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday et al., 1982). Much like the organization's concern about its employees' dedication, employees are equally concerned about the organization's commitment to them.

Employees develop global beliefs, known as perceived organizational support (POS), concerning the extent to which the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, & Lynch, 1997). Additionally, POS is encouraged when employees assign organizations human-like characteristics. Indeed, the more discretionary a reward or action such as pay or promotion, the greater contribution that action will have on one's level of POS (Shore & Shore, 1995).

Research has found consistent support for the notion that employees also form similar global perceptions regarding supervisors and coworkers. Perceived supervisor support (PSS) and perceived coworker support (PCS) are generally viewed as the employee's perception of supervisors' and coworkers' value of their contributions and concern for their well-being (Kottke & Sharafinski, 1988; Ng & Sorensen, 2008).

Organizational support theory explains both mechanisms that lead to and maintain employee POS, as well as potential outcomes and consequences of POS. Supportive treatment creates a felt obligation that, according to the reciprocity norm (Blau, 1964), will motivate employees to increase their efforts to benefit the organization (Eisenberger et al., 2001). Fulfilling this obligation leads to less stress and

increased well-being for employees. Increases in POS also heighten employees' expectancies that enhanced performance will be recognized and rewarded.

A plethora of research examining POS and its consequences exists. Indeed, Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) identified several significant consequences of perceived organizational support, including increases in in-role and extra-role performance, as well as higher levels of organizational commitment and job-related affect, and lower withdrawal behavior and psychological strain.

Despite the abundance of research examining the intricacies of employee-organization and supervisor-subordinate exchange relationships, several key gaps in the literature remain. One assertion of organizational support theory is the importance of employees' perception of the supportive treatment as an extension of the organization's value for the employee (Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades, 2002). If supervisor or coworker support is perceived by the employee as a sign of the organization's value and concern, then the employee's POS will likely increase as a result. Therefore, the extent to which support comes from an *agent* of the organization, the employee's POS will have a positive impact. Beyond supervisors and coworkers, previous research has yet to examine additional sources of support that might result in higher levels of POS. The first goal of this paper is to specifically address this gap and examine the possibility of an additional *agent* of the organization and its impact on employee POS, the internal customer/direct report.

Prior research is somewhat mixed as to how individual support constructs contribute to one's overall POS. Some research combines measures of supervisor and coworker support into one model of "social support" (George, Reed, Ballard, Colin, & Fielding, 1993). However, other researchers suggest both theoretical and practical advantages to keeping sources of support separate and distinct (Ng & Sorensen, 2008). The second goal of this project is an attempt to contribute clarity on this issue by examining whether an aggregate model of support including PSS, PCS, and support from internal customers/direct reports will more strongly predict POS than each source individually.

While previous research has addressed the link between POS and what would be considered positive performance (in-role and extra-role performance) as well as a lessening of withdrawal behaviors (Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997), little research has addressed the connection between POS and counterproductive work behaviors. Therefore, a third and final goal of the current project is to specifically address this gap in the literature and examine the relationship between POS and counterproductive work behaviors.

Hypotheses

The exchange relationships between employee-organization and supervisor-subordinate have been widely studied in recent years (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). In contrast, less research has examined the exchange relationship among coworkers and the possibility of including support from additional sources in the social exchange mix. Social exchange theory provides insight into how perceptions of support from individuals might also contribute to perceptions of organizational support.

Levinson (1965) suggested that policies and actions taken by agents of the organization are actually viewed as indications of the organization's intent rather than attributed to the inclinations of particular individuals. Indeed, employees view their supervisor's favorable or unfavorable treatment as an indication of the organization's level of support (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). Beneficial treatment received from a supervisor contributes positively to POS to the extent that employees attribute the support to the organization's policies, procedures, etc., rather than to supervisors' idiosyncrasies (Levinson, 1965). Additionally, employees are aware that supervisors communicate their evaluations of subordinates to upper management, further contributing to employees' association of supervisor support with POS. Indeed, more supportive treatment from supervisors is related to increases in subordinate POS (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Similarly, empirical support has been found suggesting that coworker support also plays an important role in employee global support perceptions. When viewed as agents of the organization, supportive treatment from coworkers (PCS) has a positive influence on employee POS (Ladd & Henry,

2000; Yoon & Lim, 1999). Additionally, perceived coworker support is recognized as having many benefits to employees' well being (Lim, 1997; Van Emmerik, Euwema, & Bakker, 2007).

Research has yet to look outside the more apparent relationships among supervisors, subordinates and coworkers, for a more thorough understanding of the support-exchange landscape. In addition to coworkers and supervisors, it is possible to consider internal customers and direct reports as potential supportive agents of the organization. If perceived as discretionary and attributed to an organization's culture, support from other stakeholders could play a role in employee POS. Discretionary support from direct reports or internal customers might be interpreted as an additional indicator of the organization's value and concern for the employee. Thus, employees' POS should see an increase with higher perceived support from other stakeholders.

> *H1. Perceived direct report/internal customer support will correlate positively with perceived organizational support.*

Prior research is mixed regarding the distinct contributions of independent sources of support to an overall social support model. While prior research consistently finds strong relationships among PSS, PCS, and POS (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002), little research has specifically addressed the additive nature of these constructs toward employee POS. Some research combines measures of supervisor and coworker support into one model of "social support" (George, Reed, Ballard, Colin, & Fielding, 1993), resulting in various positive outcomes for employees including more effective stress management. Whereas other researchers endorse keeping individual sources of support distinct for theoretical and practical advantages (Baruch-Feldman, Brondolo, Ben-Dayan, & Schwartz, 2002; Heaney, Price, & Rafferty, 1995).

Given the close connections between PSS, PCS, and POS it is possible that the organizational environment itself elicits supportive behavior from and to its constituents. Ng and Sorensen (2008) found close connections among these three sources of support and suggested that, for instance, coworkers and supervisors are part of employees' overall evaluation of the organization's support. If coworkers are seen as supportive, then it is more likely that supervisors will also be perceived as supportive, resulting in a more global perception that the organization itself is supportive of the employee. Support from one source will likely influence support from another source, resulting in an overall perception of support at work.

Because of the interrelationships among PSS, PCS, and POS, one purpose of this study is to examine the extent to which each individual source of support contributes to an overall "organizational support" model. With the addition of the direct report/internal customer support to this theoretical assertion, a 360-degree model of support is proposed such that:

> *H2. The 360-degree model of support consisting of supervisor support, coworker support, and direct report/internal customer support will more strongly predict organizational support than will any of these variables separately.*

Following organizational support theory, employees' performance outcomes should increase relative to their perceived support in the workplace. Indeed, Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) identified several significant consequences of perceived organizational support. Expected increases in in-role and extra-role performance were found, as well as higher levels of organizational commitment and job-related affect, lower withdrawal behavior and psychological strain.

Additionally, their review (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) outlined the processes underlying the relationship between POS and performance outcomes. First, employees experience an obligation to reciprocate perceived organizational support; otherwise known as the "reciprocity norm." Second, POS helps fulfill employees' socio-emotional needs for esteem, approval, and affiliation. This need fulfillment helps reduce stress, strain and enhances employee well-being. And finally, greater support from the organization increases employees' expectancies that enhanced performance will be rewarded.

While previous research has addressed the link between POS and positive performance and a lessening of withdrawal behaviors, little research has addressed the connection between POS and active negative behaviors. An interesting contrast to organizational citizenship behavior is organizationally dysfunctional behavior such as antisocial behavior (Robinson & O'Leary-Kelly, 1998), deviant behavior (Robinson & Bennett, 1995), and counterproductive behavior (Sackett, 2002). The contrast is between behaviors that are carried out to help and cooperate and behaviors that are carried out to hurt or hinder. Workplace deviance is a prevalent and expensive problem for organizations. The annual costs of workplace deviance have been estimated to be as high as $4.2 billion for workplace violence (Bensimon, 1994), $40 to $120 billion for theft (Buss, 1993; Camara & Schneider, 1994), and $6 to $200 billion for a wide range of delinquent organizational behavior (Murphy, 1993).

The most general term used to describe organizationally dysfunctional behavior is *counterproductive work behavior* (CWB). Sackett (2002) defines these behaviors as "any intentional behavior on the part of the organizational member viewed by the organization as contrary to its legitimate interests" (p.5). Based on Gruys (1999), Sackett identifies 11 categories of counterproductive behaviors: theft, destruction of property, misuse of information, misuse of time and resources, unsafe behavior, poor attendance, poor quality of work, alcohol use, drug use, inappropriate verbal actions, and inappropriate physical actions.

According to the norm of reciprocity, employees are obligated to fulfill their role in the social exchange by repaying the organization in ways that the organization finds valuable (Eisenberger et al., 1986). In addition to heightening in-role and extra-role performance, employees can fulfill this need by reducing counterproductive/deviant behaviors. If focusing specifically on dysfunctional behaviors, one could expect employees that feel supported by their organization to exhibit fewer behaviors involving theft or destruction of property, misuse of time and/or resources, unsafe behaviors, poor attendance, alcohol and drug use, and inappropriate verbal and physical actions.

Additionally, previous research (Miles, Borman, Spector, & Fox, 2002) found support that fewer CWBs are predicted by employees' perceptions of organizational constraints and positive job-related affect. Based on Rhoades and Eisenberger's (2002) findings linking POS with positive affect and well-being, a negative relationship between POS and CWBs is a reasonable assertion. The final purpose of the current study is to examine the relationship between employee POS and CWBs.

> *H3. POS will have a negative relationship with measured CWBs.*
> *H4. POS will predict*
>> a) *in-role performance,*
>> b) *extra-role performance,*
>> c) *and counter-productive work behaviors.*

METHOD

Participants

Survey respondents totaled 154 and were employees and supervisors from one of three organizations: a public community college (faculty and staff; *n*=68), a small non-profit counseling and consulting group (social workers, staff, and counselors; *n*=19), and a medium-security level correctional facility (security officers, staff, and administration; *n*=67). The typical respondent was female (51%), 44 years of age (range of 21-70 years of age), held a graduate (40%) or undergraduate degree (31%), worked full-time (86%) and had worked for her organization an average of eight years. The number of surveys distributed to employees and supervisors totaled 335. However, only 154 of the employee surveys matched a supervisor survey, which resulted in a response rate of 50%.

Procedures

Upon organizational approval for project participation, participants were notified of impending data collection in one of two ways: 1) through a group email announcing the project, potential risks and benefits, confidentiality, and a link to the secure online survey, in addition to in-person department

meetings with the researcher, or 2) an in-person meeting with the researcher during pre-shift meetings. The counseling group and the community college surveys were administered through a secure online format, which the employees and their supervisors could access on their individual computers. The correctional facility administered paper-and-pencil surveys, which were distributed during security officer pre-shift meetings.

Measures
Support Measures
The nine-item Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (Eisenberger et al., 1990) was used to assess participants' perceived organizational support ($\alpha = .95$). This survey used a five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A sample item from this survey is "My organization really cares about my well-being."

To measure perceived supervisor support, Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli's (2001) four-item survey was administered to all participants ($\alpha = .92$). Responses to these items used a five-point scale ranging from 1 (strong disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A sample item from this survey is "My supervisor cares about my opinions."

To measure perceived coworker support, Ladd and Henry's (2000) nine-item survey was administered to all participants ($\alpha = .94$). Employees reported their level of agreement using a five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A sample item from this survey is "My coworkers are supportive of my goals and values."

A modified nine-item version of the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (Eisenberger et al., 1990) was also used ($\alpha = .96$). The "target" of each item was changed such that the referent indicated direct reports instead of the organization. This survey used a five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). An example item from this survey is "My direct reports are supportive of my goals and values."

Performance Measures
Supervisors used an eight-item measure to assess in-role performance (Nielsen, 2002; $\alpha = .95$). Participants rated in-role performance using an eight-point scale (Performance: 1=does not meet standards, 2=is less than satisfactory, 3=is satisfactory in most respects, 4=is satisfactory in all respects, 5=is above average, 6=is superior in almost all respects, 7=is definitely superior in all respects, 8=is the single best performance). Items on this survey assess productivity, quality, openness to new learning, relationships with other associates, dependability and reliability, ability to function under stress, attendance and timeliness, and overall job performance. This measure was administered to supervisors. A sample item from this survey is "*His/her* dependability and reliability…," etc.).

Extra-role behaviors were measured using a 14-item scale developed by Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1994). This survey includes three dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior: 1) helping (seven items), 2) civic virtue (three items), and 3) sportsmanship (four items). Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with a list of employee behaviors on a scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This scale was administered to supervisors ($\alpha = .93$). A sample item from this survey is "Willingly gives of his or her time to help other agents who have work-related problems."

Counterproductive work behaviors were assessed with a ten-item survey (Kelloway, Loughlin, Barling, & Nault, 2002). Participants were asked to indicate how often they engage in each of the listed behaviors on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (very often). This measure was administered to participants and reported a coefficient alpha reliability estimate of .75. A sample item from this survey is "Exaggerated about your hours worked."

RESULTS

All variable descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients can be found in Table 1.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND INTERCORRELATIONS

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Demographics (N=154)										
1. Organization	.99	.93	-							
2. Age	44.19	12.78	-.05	-						
3. Gender	.49	.51	.30**	.09	-					
4. Education	2.11	.85	-.63**	.05	-.17*	-				
5. Full-/Part- Time	.14	.35	-.18*	-.13	-.21**	-.03	-			
6.Job Category	2.04	1.77	.95**	-.02	.31**	-.68**	-.08	-		
7. Tenure	98.09	97.47	.10	.51**	.18*	.02	-.29**	.08	-	
Employee Self-ratings (N=154)										
8. POS	3.77	.80	-.10	-.16	-.15	.14	.16*	-.06	-.19*	(.95)
9. PSS	4.15	.82	-.20*	-.11	-.13	.24**	.16*	-.15	-.18*	.68**
10. PCS	3.93	.71	-.11	.04	-.11	.11	.07	-.03	-.01	.49**
11.DRS (N=74)	3.84	.74	-.23	.09	-.13	.28*	.16	-.11	-.04	.57**
12. OCB	4.06	.41	-.07	.02	-.02	.18*	-.09	-.04	-.1	.48**
13.CWB	1.28	.30	-.01	.00	.03	.05	.01	-.04	.18*	-.30**
14. Performance	6.03	1.06	.04	.00	.04	.09	-.15	.03	.03	.11
Supervisor Ratings (N=154)										
15. Performance	5.49	1.28	.04	-.02	-.16*	.00	.16*	.12	-.18*	.29**
16. OCB	3.90	.62	.05	-.08	-.17*	-.05	.12	.10	-.26**	.31**

Note. The alpha internal-consistency reliabilities appear in parentheses along the main diagonal. *p<.05. **p<.01.

TABLE 1
CONTINUED

Variable	*M*	*SD*	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Employee Self Ratings (N=154)										
9. PSS	4.15	.82	(.92)							
10. PCS	3.93	.71	.54**	(.94)						
11.DRS (N=74)	3.84	.74	.70**	.60**	(.96)					
12. OCB	4.06	.41	.42**	.28**	.54**	(.79)				
13.CWB	1.28	.30	-.23**	-.21**	-.25*	-.26**	(.75)			
14. Performance	6.03	1.06	.16	.12	.12	.36**	-.21**	(.93)		
Supervisor Ratings (N=154)										
15. Performance	5.49	1.28	.33**	.20*	.39**	.17*	-.13	.08	(.95)	
16. OCB	3.90	.62	.31**	.21*	.29*	.15	-.14	.04	.72**	(.93)

Note. The alpha internal-consistency reliabilities appear in parentheses along the main diagonal. *p<.05. **p<.0

H1. Perceived direct report/internal customer support will correlate positively with perceived organizational support.

The hypothesis was supported, with DRS reporting a significant positive relationship with POS ($r =$ .57; $p \leq$ .01). Additionally, PSS and PCS also reported significant ($p \leq$ .01) and positive relationships with POS ($r =$ .68 and $r =$ .49, respectively).

H2. The 360-degree model of support consisting of supervisor support, coworker support, and direct report/internal customer support will more strongly predict organizational support than will any of these variables separately.

This hypothesis was tested using hierarchical regression (Aiken & West, 1991). An examination of the correlation matrix (Table 1) provided insight into the potential influence of control variables. Organization reported a negative correlation with PSS, such that higher levels of PSS are evidenced more in the first and second organizations of the study. Education was positively correlated with PSS and DRS such that higher levels of education correspond to higher levels of perceived support. Job status (coded 0 for full-time and 1 for part-time) positively correlated with both POS and PSS such that employees with part-time status in their organizations reported slightly higher levels of POS and PSS. Tenure negatively correlated with both POS and PSS, such that employees with greater tenure within their organizations reported lower levels of perceived support from their organization and supervisors. Therefore, the following served as control variables in the regression for Hypothesis 2: education, tenure, organization, and status. Education and organization were both dummy coded into dichotomous variables. Tenure was reported in months.

The first step regressed POS on employee education, tenure, organization, and status. Perceived supervisor support, PCS, and DRS were then added as the second, third, and fourth steps, respectively. An aggregated variable was created from the means of PSS, PCS, and DRS, which was then added as the fifth and final step of the regression. The significance of the change in R^2 was examined to test whether PSS, PCS, DRS, and the aggregated support variable predicted incremental variance in POS beyond the control variables and each other. The second hypothesis was not supported (See Table 2). The two significant predictors of POS were PSS, accounting for 40% of the variance ($p \leq$ .01), and PCS, accounting for an additional 3% of the variance ($p \leq$ .01). Both DRS and the aggregated support variable failed to account for any additional variance ($\Delta R^2 =$ .00; $p \geq$ .05, for both).

TABLE 2
**HIERARCHICAL REGRESSION ANALYSES – INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT
VARIABLES AND POS**

Variable	Perceived Organizational Support		
	Adjusted R^2	ΔR^2	β
Step 1	.05**	.07*	
Education			.17
Tenure			-.15
Org			.05
Status			.13
Step 2	.46**	.40**	
Education			.02
Tenure			-.06
Org			.06
Status			.05
PSS			.67**
Step 3	.48**	.03**	
Education			.03
Tenure			-.08
Org			.07
Status			.05
PSS			.56**
PCS			.20**
Step 4	.48**	.00	
Education			.03
Tenure			-.08
Org			.07
Status			.05
PSS			.56**
PCS			.19**
DRS			.00
Step 5	.48**	.00	
Education			.03
Tenure			-.08
Org			.07
Status			.04
PSS			.36
PCS			.02
DRS			-.04
Aggregate			.36

Note. n = 154. Standardized regression coefficients are reported. *$p \leq$ .05. ** $p \leq$ .01.

H3: POS will have a negative relationship with CWBs.

The hypothesis was supported, with CWB reporting a significant negative relationship with POS (*r = -.21*; $p \leq$ .01). Additionally, in-role and extra-role performance also reported significant ($p \leq$ .01) yet positive relationships with POS (*r = .20* and *r = .21*, respectively).

H4. POS will predict a) in-role performance, b) extra-role performance, and c) counter-productive work behaviors.

This hypothesis was also tested using hierarchical regression (Aiken & West, 1991). The correlation matrix was consulted to examine the potential influence of control variables. As shown in Table 1, gender (coded 0 for female and 1 for male) negatively correlated with in-role performance and OCB, such that women received lower performance and OCB ratings from their supervisors than did men. Tenure was also negatively correlated with both in-role performance and OCB such that employees with greater tenure at their organizations tended to receive lower supervisor ratings for in-role performance and OCB. Therefore, gender and tenure served as control variables for all Hypothesis 4 regressions.

Separate regressions were run for each variable predicted in Hypothesis 4. The first step regressed tenure and gender on all of the performance measures. Perceived organizational support was entered as the second step for all regressions. Please see Table 3 for the complete regression results.

Findings support the ability of POS to predict in-role performance. Perceived organizational support accounted for 6% of the in-role performance variation ($\beta = .25$; $p \leq .01$).

Findings support the ability of POS to predict OCB. Perceived organizational support accounted for 7% additional variance beyond that of other variables ($p \leq .01$). OCB was best predicted by POS ($\beta = .26$; $p \leq .01$) and tenure ($\beta = -.19$; $p \leq .05$).

Additionally, results supported the ability of POS to predict CWB. Perceived organizational support accounted for 8% additional variance in CWB beyond that of other variables ($p \leq .01$) and was the strongest predictor ($\beta = -.28$; $p \leq .01$).

TABLE 3
HIERARCHICAL REGRESSION ANALYSES – POS AND PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

Variable	Performance (n = 154)			Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (n = 154)			Counterproductive Work Behaviors (n = 154)		
	R^2	ΔR^2	β	R^2	ΔR^2	β	R^2	ΔR^2	β
Step 1	.04*	.05*		.07**	.08**		.02	.03	
Tenure			-.16*			-.23**			.18*
Gender			-.14			-.12			.00
Step 2	.09**	.06**		.13**	.07**		.09**	.08**	
Tenure			-.11			-.19*			.13
Gender			-.11			-.09			-.04
POS			.25**			.26**			-.28**

Note. Adjusted R^2 and standardized regression coefficients are reported. *$p \leq .05$. **$p \leq .01$.

DISCUSSION

This project seeks to address notable gaps in the POS literature, namely an expansion of our current understanding of POS and its antecedents and outcomes. While empirical research to date has largely focused on the relationships among PSS, PCS, and POS (Ladd & Henry, 2000; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Yoon & Lim, 1999), the potential relationship between employees and additional stakeholders such as direct reports or internal customers has received little attention. Additionally, the POS literature has yet to fully address a performance model including CWBs.

An Expanded POS Model

Hypothesis 1 received strong support in the present findings. Consistent with previous research, the present results confirm that PSS and PCS are both important contributors to one's POS (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002), suggesting that individual support received from coworkers and supervisors contributes to a global sense of support received from the organization. Present findings also highlight a strong relationship between DRS and POS, indicating that support received from direct reports and internal customers is also a consideration in an employee's overall sense of support in the workplace.

Previous research has chiefly focused on the relationships among PSS, PCS, and POS (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Ng & Sorensen, 2008), without consideration of other important stakeholders such as direct reports or internal customers to the POS landscape. The present findings indicate that a more complete understanding of POS and its antecedent conditions should include support received from direct reports and internal customers. This finding contributes to the POS literature and expands our understanding of supportive relationships in the workplace.

A second purpose of this study was to examine an aggregate model predicting POS that includes PSS, PCS, and DRS, which might add clarity to inconsistent findings in the literature (George et al., 1993; Ng & Sorensen, 2008) regarding how individual sources of support contribute to one's overall POS. However, the results failed to support the notion of a 360-degree model of individual support predicting POS. Instead, PSS and PCS remained the only significant predictors of POS and continued to account for significant additional variance in POS beyond that of the control variables, DRS, and the aggregated support variable. Support from supervisors and coworkers appears to play a vital role in employees' global assessments of organizational support, regardless of the perceived support from additional stakeholders such as internal customers/direct reports. This finding adds evidence to the literature concerning the significance of supervisor and coworker support in the workplace.

The concept of a 360-degree support model stems from the notion that particular employees can be seen as representatives of the organization and influence employees' individual assessments of POS. Employees tend to assign humanlike characteristics to the organization and view it as a living entity because of its ability to exert power, define roles, and enact policy and norms (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Levinson, 1965). Employees' perspectives of the organization's favorable or unfavorable treatment toward them are then encouraged through this human-like attribution. To the extent that an employee is seen as an agent of the organization, support provided by that employee will be seen as an extension of the *organization's* favor or concern rather than simply due to the whims of the individual. More specifically, the favorable or unfavorable treatment employees receive from their supervisors, coworkers, and direct reports is an indication of how the *organization* favors or disfavors them.

The current findings indicate, however, that despite the strong correlation between DRS and POS, DRS does not predict employee POS and accounts for no significant variance in the model. This suggests that while DRS is in some capacity related to POS, perhaps employees do not perceive internal customers or direct reports as *agents* of the organization. Additionally, the perceived status of direct reports and internal customers within the organization will likely influence the impact of support received from these sources. If the focal employee does not view the supportive employee as a direct agent or as having high status within the organization, then the support received by that person is less likely to be attributed to the organization, thereby limiting its effect on the employee's POS.

Supervisors' perceived status in the organization has been shown to moderate the relationship between PSS and POS (Eisenberger et al., 2002). Employees judged supervisors' informal organizational status as a function of three criteria: 1) the organization's positive valuation of the supervisor and care about the supervisor's welfare, 2) the supervisor's influence over important organizational decisions, and 3) the authority and autonomy allotted supervisors to carry out their job responsibilities. PSS was positively related to POS for supervisors of both high and low organizational status. However, they found that the effect of PSS on POS was stronger when the supervisor was highly favored by the organization, suggesting that supervisors judged as having higher favor with the organization are seen as better agents of the organization's character, which strengthens the relationship between PSS and POS.

An explanation for the lack of additive predictive power of direct report/internal customer support to employee POS may lie in this notion of organizational status. Based on the three criteria used in the Eisenberger, et al. (2002) study, one could postulate that direct reports' status in the organization would depend on: 1) the organization's positive valuation of the direct report and care for that person, 2) the extent of direct reports' influence over important organizational decisions, and 3) the authority and autonomy allotted direct reports to carry out their job responsibilities. According to this model, DRS could still be positively related to POS, but the ability of DRS to predict POS would increase to the degree that direct reports are judged by the focal employee as having higher informal organizational status.

In the current sample, informal organizational status may indeed account for this lack of prediction. Lower-level security officers, staff, counselors, and college faculty largely comprised the sample for this study. The security officers and staff have little influence over important organizational decisions and little to no authority or autonomy to carry out their job responsibilities. The counselors and faculty in this sample by necessity of their job characteristics have more authority and autonomy to carry out their job responsibilities. Their direct influence over important organizational decisions, however, is limited. Therefore, the lack of prediction of POS by DRS in the present study might, in fact, be a function of job characteristics and informal organizational status.

Prior research has been mixed as to how perceived support components need be addressed, both theoretically and empirically. Some research combines measures of supervisor and coworker support into one model of "social support" (George et al., 1993). Still other researchers suggest both theoretical and practical advantages to keeping the support contributions separate and distinct (Ng & Sorensen, 2008). Current findings suggest that while support from supervisors, coworkers, and direct reports all contribute to one's POS, they are perhaps best considered distinct constructs and should not be combined into an overall "social support" index.

POS and Performance

A third purpose of this study is an expansion of the POS-performance literature. Previous research has long held that employees with a heightened sense of POS tend to exhibit both increased in-role performance (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Randall, Cropanzano, Bormann, & Birjulin, 1999), and extra-role performance directed toward both individuals and the organization as a whole (Ladd & Henry, 2000; Randall et al., 1999; Shore & Wayne, 1993). The present findings with regard to in-role performance and OCB confirm this literature and also expand current knowledge with the addition of counterproductive work behaviors to the POS-performance model.

Previous research has not fully addressed the connection between POS and active negative behaviors, such as counterproductive work behaviors. Workplace deviance is a prevalent and expensive problem for organizations, with estimated annual costs into the billions for workplace violence, theft, and a variety of delinquent behaviors (Bensimon, 1994; Buss, 1993; Camara & Schneider, 1994; & Murphy, 1993).

The theoretical assertions of organizational support theory posit that employees are motivated through various mechanisms to repay organizations for discretionary treatment they receive. It stands to reason that the same employees motivated to repay with more active positive behaviors and fewer withdrawal behaviors might also feel compelled to exhibit fewer delinquent behaviors. These results both support these assertions and provide empirical confirmation that employees with increased POS will exhibit fewer CWBs, such as theft or destruction of property, misuse of time and/or resources, unsafe behaviors, and inappropriate verbal and physical actions. A more complete understanding of POS and its outcomes should not only include in-role and extra-role performance, but also employee CWBs.

Future Implications

Given the importance of both coworker and supervisor support found in the present study and in prior research (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002), future research might examine specific supportive behaviors. Current measures of PSS and PCS do not allow for the assessment of specific behaviors that

might lead to experienced increases of POS. Future investigations might include objective assessments of such behaviors as positive feedback, coaching, opinion-seeking, inclusion, flexibility, etc.

From a practical standpoint, additional research on PSS and its antecedents might have great impact in the workplace. Research has shown that supportive and caring treatment by employees' supervisors such as leader consideration, leader communication, participative leadership, and high-quality leader-member exchanges are positively related to employees' commitment and performance (Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Settoon, Bennett, & Liden, 1996). Developing supervisors' leadership skills, communication skills, and consideration for employees might have important commitment and performance consequences that should be considered by practitioners and organizations.

The current study highlights the relationship between support received from direct reports (DRS) and employees' POS, which has yet to be addressed in previous POS research. While DRS failed to predict POS over and above that of supervisor support, prior research indicates that individual support components may impact performance differentially. For example, research indicates that POS predicts both extra-role behaviors directed toward individuals and the organization as a whole (Ladd & Henry, 2000). However, Randall and colleagues (1999) found that POS better predicted extra-role behaviors directed toward the organization, while PCS better predicted extra-role behaviors directed toward individuals. Future studies might consider more thoroughly examining how PCS, PSS, and DRS contribute to our prediction of various performance measures.

Given the prevalence and expense of workplace deviance for organizations, a practical implication of the present findings is increased justification for emphasizing the importance of employees' POS. The present results lend credibility to the notion that not only will POS result in less absenteeism and tardiness, but also fewer deviant behaviors such as gossip, theft, and sabotage. Given the exorbitant cost of workplace deviance, an emphasis on developing supervisors' behaviors and consideration of employees as well as a focus on increasing employee POS might result in great cost savings to the organization in terms of asset protection and employee tenure.

Limitations

One limitation of the present study is that all support measures come from the same source – the subordinate. In addition, subordinates self-reported ratings of CWB. Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003) discuss common method variance, or variance that is attributable to the measurement method rather than to the constructs the measures represent, and indicate that it is one of the main sources of measurement error, which threatens the validity of researchers' conclusions. Obtaining construct measures from the same individual and using measures that are worded similarly both potentially contribute to common method bias. Common method variance could weaken the findings in the present study with regard to the support variables and CWB.

The population and settings involved in this study may have reduced external validity. Participants are limited to the corrections, counseling, and academic occupations. Therefore, results may not generalize to all occupations and all organizations. As mentioned earlier, different findings might emerge when studying occupations with greater autonomy and discretion over organizational policy and decisions. Additionally, support received from teammates and coworkers working in cohesive teams may impact an employee's POS as strongly as PSS impacted the POS of employees in this study.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the present study reported three main findings. The first concerns the need to include support received from additional stakeholders like direct reports and internal customers for a more complete understanding of the POS landscape. Previous research has not examined this relationship and the current findings suggest that it plays a role in employees' global perceptions of support from an organization.

The second key finding concerns the extent of the relationships among PCS, PSS and POS. Previous research has examined individual support measures and POS, reporting consistent positive relationships

between PSS, PCS, and POS. However, the present study was able to examine the predictive value of each support measure and found that PSS and PCS were the only significant predictors of POS, stifling the effects of other support variables, including the aggregated variable. This finding is a contribution to existing literature on this topic and indicates that perhaps future research and practice should focus more clearly on PSS, PCS, their antecedents, and resulting behaviors. Consequently, additional investigation is needed to add clarity to the predictive nature of DRS for one's POS.

The third key finding concerns the relationship between POS and performance outcomes. Present results indicate that POS is indeed a robust predictor of both in-role and extra-role performance, which supports previous literature on this topic. Additionally, a strong negative relationship was found between POS and CWB such that employees performed fewer negative or deviant behaviors with increased POS. This contributes to existing literature on this topic, which has to date focused mainly on the relationship between POS, in-role and extra-role performance, and withdrawal behaviors. These results provide evidence that POS not only lessens withdrawal behaviors, but also reduces deviance. A clear distinction exists between the characterization of performance outcomes as active deviant behaviors (CWBs) and withdrawal of positive behaviors (withdrawal behaviors). According to the present findings, POS can now be considered a strong predictor of the most widely measured performance outcomes including active deviance and positive withdrawal.

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