Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Commitment: The Mediating Role of Organization Based Self-Esteem

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Algılanan Örgütsel Destek ve Şirkete Bağlılık: Örgüt Temelli Öz-Saygının Rolü
Özet

148 beyaz yakalı çalışanın katıldığı bu çalışma, algılanan örgütsel destek ile örgütsel bağlılık arasında ilişkiyi ve ayrıca bu değişkenler arasında örgüt temelli özsaygının ara değişken olarak rolünü incelemektedir. Sonuçlar algılanan örgütsel destek ve duygusal bağlılık ve normative bağlılık arasında anlamlı pozitif bir ilişkinin olduğunu ancak devam bağlılığı ile negatif bir ilişkinin olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Örgüt temelli özsaygının ise algılanan örgütsel destek ile duygusal bağlılık arasında kısmi, algılanan örgütsel destek ve devam bağlılığı arasında ise tam olarak ara değişken rolü gördüğü saptanmıştır. Araştırma sonuçları örgüt temelli özsaygının normatif bağlılık açısından herhangi bir ara değişken rolü olmadığını göstermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Algılanan Örgütsel Destek, Örgüt Temelli Özsaygı, Örgütsel Bağlılık*

Abstract

Present study examines the relationship between perceived organizational support (POS) and organizational commitment and the mediating role of organization based self-esteem between these variables. 148 white collared employees participated to the study. Results indicated a significant relationship between POS and affective commitment and normative commitment, but a negative relationship between POS and continuance commitment. Results reveal that organization based self-esteem (OBSE) has a partial mediating role between perceived organizational support and affective commitment and full mediating role between perceived organizational support and continuance commitment. Findings also indicate that OBSE has no mediating role between perceived organizational support and normative commitment.

Keywords: *Perceived Organizational Support, Organization Based Self-Esteem, Organizational Commitment*

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INTRODUCTION

Work is defined by organizational theorists as an exchange process that employees put their effort and commitment and get pysical and emotional benefits which the organization offers them. This exchange relationship between the employer and the employee emphasizes the result that organizations achieve favorable and desirable outcomes by treating them geneorusly (Gould, 1979; Levinson, 1965). For employees, the organization serves as an important source of socio-emotional resources, such as respect and caring, and tangible benefits, such as wages and medical benefits. When organizations recognize their employees, they would help them to meet their needs for approval, esteem, and affiliation (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, and Sowa, 1986). Positive valuation by the organization also provides an indication that increased effort will be noted and rewarded. Perceived Organizational Support (POS) holds that in order to meet *socio-emotional* needs and to assess the benefits of increased work effort, employees form a general perception concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. Such perceived organizational support would increase employees' felt obligation to help the organization reach its objectives, their commitment to the organization, and their expectation that improved performance would be rewarded (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, and Sowa, 1986; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002; Shore and Shore, 1995). Employees who perceive the organization as caring for their well-being are, therefore, assumed to be more likely to reciprocate not only in engaging in various forms of pro-social behavior directed toward the organization, but also by developing a stronger sense of organizational commitment.

It has been persuasively argued that due to the high degree of situational strength characterizing most organizational contexts, personality exerts relatively little influence in the workplace. But one personality attribute that predictably and consistently enhances understanding of organizational behavior is 'self-esteem'. Researchers have distinguished among several types of esteem, including global self-esteem, role-based self-esteem, and task-based self-esteem. Within the last five years, an additional form, "organization-based self-esteem" (OBSE), has appeared in the literature. OBSE reflects the degree to which employees self-perceive themselves as important, meaningful, effectual, and worthwhile within the organizational setting (Pierce, Gardner, Cummings and Dunham, 1989).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee commitment to the organization. The mediating role of OBSE between POS and organizational commitment will be studied as well.

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. Perceived Organizational Support and Organizational Commitment

Organizational support theory supposses that to meet socioemotional needs and to determine the organization's readiness to reward increased work effort, employees develop beliefs concerning to the extent which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Orpen, 1994). Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, and Sowa, (1986) called this belief as "Perceived Organizational Support". Perceived organizational support develops by meeting employees' socioemotional needs and showing readiness to reward employees' extra efforts and to give help that would be needed by employees to do their jobs better (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, and Sowa, 1986).

Perceived organizational support draws on the social exchange theory developed by Blau (1964) to explain employee-organization relationships. According to the theory, each party has perceptions and expectations regarding the behavior of the other party, but these expectations and perceptions are related with the timing or the specifics of what each party must render. If both parties benefited from the exchange, neither will know whether the expectations of the other have been fully met. Thus, social exchanges involve reciprocity (Tansky and Cohen, 2001). Based on the above arguments, perceived organizational support encompasses the employees' perception about their organizations' concern with their well-being and their contributions. Perceived organizational support covers the degree to which employees feel that the organization is willing to fairly compensate them with the exchange of their efforts, help them when they need make their work interesting and stimulating, and provide them with adequate working conditions (Aube, Rousseau and Morin, 2007).

POS has been hypothesized to influence employees' general reactions to their job, including job satisfaction (Çakar and Yıldız, 2009), job involvement (George and Brief, 1992) organizational commitment (Eisenberger, Fasolo and

Lamastro-Davis, 1990) and intention to leave (Guzzo, Noonan, and Elron, 1994). Organizational commitment is one of the important consequences of POS. Employees with high perceived organizational support feel indebtedness to respond favorably to the organization in the form of positive job attitudes and organizational behaviors and also support organizational goals (Loi, Hang-Yue and Foley, 2006).

The relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment is commonly explained by reciprocity and social exchange. From the social exchange theory perspective, Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, and Sowa, (1986) argued that beliefs underlie employees' inferences concerning their organizations' commitment to them in turn contribute to the employees' commitment to their organizations. High perceived organizational support creates an obligation for employees. Employees feel an obligation that they not only ought to be committed to their organizations, but also feel an obligation to return the organizations' commitment by showing behaviors that support organizational goals (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, and Sowa, 1986).

Employees affectively committed to the organization by the felt obligation to contribute to the organization's well-being and help the organization reach its goals. Employees then return through affective commitment and show greater efforts at work (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, and Sowa, 1986; Mowday, Porter and Steers, 1982; Rousseau, 1989). Perceived organizational support increases affective commitment by contributing to the satisfaction of the employees' socio-emotional needs such as esteem, approval and affiliation (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, and Sowa, 1986; Fuller, Barnett, Hester and Relyea, 2003). This satisfaction will serve to enhance employees' social identity by being a member of that organization which creates greater affective commitment. Thus,

H$_{1a}$: There is a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and affective commitment.

The relationship between normative commitment and perceived organizational support can be explained by the norm of reciprocity. Accordingly, a person who experiences favorable behaviors, attitudes or rewards from someone, feels the obligation to return to that favor. From the employee point of view; when the employee perceives that their employer shows care about his/her well-being, he/she feels indebtedness to the

organization and indicates loyalty. This kind of loyalty specifically includes the normative part of commitment (Aube, Rousseau and Morin, 2007). Therefore, it is expected that,

H$_{1b}$: There is a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and normative commitment.

According to Rhoades and Eisenberger's (2002) study, there is a weak negative relationship between continuance commitment and perceived organizational support. This negative relationship is explained with the decrease of feelings of being stuck in the organization, when the employee thinks that the cost of leaving is influenced by the perceived organizational support. A high level of perceived organizational support may help to restore the balance between the positive reinforcements taken by the organization and the contributions of the individual. Specifically, when individuals perceive high level of organizational support, the costs associated with leaving the job will be perceived as less important than if they thought that they had given a great deal to the organization without having received anything in return (Aube, Rousseau and Morin, 2007). Also, O'Driscoll and Randall (1999) stated that, continuance commitment is more likely to be influenced by perceptions of being poorly treated rather than perceptions of support from the organization. Thus, the following hypothesis is formulated;

H$_{1c}$: There is a negative relationship between perceived organizational support and continuance commitment.

1.2. The Role of Organization Based Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is a concept which has been widely researched during the recent years. Early studies go back to Rosenberg (1965; cited in Pierce and Gardner, 2004) and the construct was defined as the overall self-evaluation of an individual regarding his/her competencies. In other words, it is the level on which the individual expresses approval or disapproval with him/herself. That is, the overall assessment of the individual's own value as a person. Korman (1970) defines self-esteem as the extent to which the person "sees him/herself as a competent, need-satisfying individual" (p.32) and as a conclusion the individual with a high level of self-esteem has a "sense of personal adequacy and a sense of having achieved need satisfaction in the past" (Korman, 1966, p.

479). A person with high self-esteem is expected to feel good about himself / herself and feel more satisfied.

Researchers have distinguished among several types of esteem, including global self-esteem (an individual's overall evaluation of worth), role-based self-esteem (worth derived from employment in a particular position), and task-based self-esteem (worth based on self-efficacy). Within the last five years, an additional form, "organization-based self-esteem" (OBSE), has appeared in the literature. OBSE reflects the degree to which employees self-perceive themselves as important, meaningful, effectual, and worthwhile within the organizational setting (Pierce, Gardner, Cummings and Dunham, 1989). The definition of OBSE drew interest because it had been hypothesized that the self-esteem of an individual, shaped around work and organizational experiences, has an important role in establishing his/her work-related motivation, attitudes and behavior. Based on this, Korman (1970) had found that employees with higher levels of self-esteem were more inclined to have positive attitudes toward their workplace and perform better than colleagues with lower levels of self-esteem.

There are several empirical investigations that provide insight into the relationship between OBSE and employee attitudes. Satisfaction and organizational commitment are the two attitudes that have received all of the research attention (Lee and Peccei, 2007; Van Dyne and Pierce, 2003). The findings concerning organizational commitment reported a significant and positive relationship between OBSE and commitment and showed that employees with high levels of self-esteem are more committed to their organizations than their low self-esteem colleagues.

Since the main purpose of this study is to investigate the mediating role of OBSE between POS and OC, the logic underlying this investigation can be explained as twofold. Individuals, to some extent, view themselves through how they are viewed by others. As individuals contact with other people and entities that encourage certain beliefs about the self, it is more likely that they will internalize those beliefs and others' views will become a part of the self. The important parts in this respect are the views and reactions of people and entities that individuals respect and regard as important. If these people hold the self as high, one's own sense of self-esteem will be high (Hewitt, 1997). Within an organizational context, the organization itself is an important source for employees (Van Dyne, Vandewalle, Kostova, Latham, and Cummings, 2000). Thus, the appraisal of the organization, reflected in employees' perceived sense

of organizational support, may play a key role in enhancing individuals' sense of OBSE. The second logic is that a high sense of OBSE is likely to be psychologically satisfying employees. When this psychological satisfaction is associated with the organization through perceived organizational support; OBSE can be expected to enhance their commitment to the organization (Lee and Peccei, 2007).

Fuller, Barnett, Hester and Relyea (2003) studied POS and organizational commitment through OBSE from a social identity perspective. Social identity theory states that "people remain loyal when they feel that their organizations ... value and appreciate them" (Tyler, 1999, p.235). According to social identity theory, when people think that their organization appreciates and values them, this is an indication of organizational respect for them (Tyler, 1999). This is can be interpreted as a form of organizational support. Additionally, having a salient social identity involves seeing oneself as part of a larger whole (Rousseau, 1998). They can belong to multiple groups or collectives, including an organization, division, and work team. This is likely to increase individuals' organizational commitment because it improves their social identity. Moreover, social identity is reflected in people's self-esteem (Chattopadhyay, 1999). Therefore, the second hypothesis will be as follows;

Hypothesis 2: OBSE will mediate the relationship between POS and organizational commitment.

2. METHOD

2.1. Sample

Sample consisted of 148 white collar employees working in İstanbul. All the respondents work in private sector such as banking, insurance, telecommunication, pharmaceutical, and chemical. Data were collected by convenience sampling. 54.1% of the sample consisted of females and 45.9% of males. Average tenure of employees is 13.5 years and organizational tenure of them is 6.6 years. Participants were between the ages of 22 and 52 and the mean age is 35.

2.2. Procedure

Questionnaires were distributed in a closed envelope by researchers. A brief oral information was given to the respondents about the procedure and confidentiality of the study. For each participant the procedure took approximately 20 minutes. Questionnaires were distributed and collected within

a month. 200 questionaires were distributed, but 148 of them were turned back. The response rate of the surveys was 74%.

2.3. Instruments

The questionnaire used for this study consists of four parts. The first part includes demographic information about the participants.

The second part consists of short form of Perceived Organizational Support scale developed by (Eisenberger Huntington, Hutchinson, and Sowa, 1986). The scale consists of 8 items and is measured on a 6 point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6).

The Organization Based Self-Esteem scale was developed by Pierce, Gardner, Cummings and Dunham (1989). The scale consists of 10 items and is measured on a 6 point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6). The scale translated to Turkish by the professors of Marmara University, Department of Business Administration, for which considerable validity evidence exists. The Cronbach-alpha for 10 item in the original scale is .93 (Lee and Peccei, 2007).

Organizational commitment is measured by Organizational Commitment Scale developed by Meyer and Allen (1991). Organizational commitment has three dimensions and each dimension is measured by six items on a 6 point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6). Items were standardized in Turkish by Wasti (2000). She found Cronbach-alpha reliability score as .93. The Cronbach-alpha Reliability score of the original scale was .94 (Meyer and Allen, 1991).

3. RESULTS

3.1. Factor Analysis for Organization Based Self-Esteem and Organizational Commitment Items

Although OBSE is developed and used in many studies as a unidimensional concept (Pierce, Gardner, Cummings and Dunham, 1989; Gardner, Van Dyne and Pierce, 2004; Brutus, Ruderman, Ohlott and McCauley, 2000), authors wanted to run factor analysis to see whether the items will load on a single factor or not. Factor analyses using a principle components solution with varimax rotation was applied to the 10 items of organization based self-esteem scale. As shown in Table 1, organization based self-esteem items loaded on two factors. Both factors explain a total of 70.20% of the variance. The items loaded under the first factor indicate leadership characteristics. This factor has been

named **Organization Based Self-Respect** and explains 36.05% of the variance. This factor is composed of six items and Cronbach-alfa reliability score is .88. The second factor of the scale contains items like trustworthiness, being able to work with others and some other competencies that lead to increase the employees' efficiency so that it is named as **Organization Based Self-Confidence.** This factor explains 34.15% of the variance. It contains four items and has a reliability of .86.

Table 1. Factor Structure of Organization Based Self-Esteem

	Factor Loadings	
	1	2
Factor 1: Organization Based Self-Respect		
I am cooperative around here	.805	
I am trusted around here	.800	
There is faith in me around here	.747	
I am helpful around here	.724	
I am efficient around here	.687	
I am valuable around here	.672	
Factor 2: Organization Based Self-Confidence		
I count around here		.902
I am important here		.844
I am taken seriously around here		.820
I can make difference around here		.617
Percentage of explained variance	36.05	34.15
Total variance 70.20		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sampling adequacy		.85
Bartlett's test of sphericity 990.57*		

*P<.001

Organizational commitment scale was factor analyzed using varimax rotation. Consistent with the literature, the scale loaded on three factors and explained 58.80% of the total variance. One item was excluded from the analysis because of low loading. The first factor was named as affective commitment and explained the 29.70% of the variance. Cronbach-alpha score for affective commitment is .90. The second factor of the scale is called

continuance organizational commitment just as in its original study. The continuance organizational commitment factor explained 14.89% of the variance. cronbach-alpha score for this factor is .76. The third factor is similar to the original scale named as normative organizational commitment. The normative organizational commitment factor explains 14.20% of the variance. This factor's cronbach-alpha score is .61.

Table 2. Factor Analysis of Organizational Commitment

	Factor Loadings		
	1	2	3
Factor 1: Affective Commitment			
I am not afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up (R)	.795		
I do not feel emotionally attached to this organization. (R)	.758		
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning to me	.758		
I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization (R)	.743		
I feel "like part of my family" at my organization	.722		
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.	.666		
This organization deserves my loyalty	.637		
I feel as if these organization's problems are my own.	.611		
I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one organization	.587		
I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it	.539		
Factor 2: Continuance Commitment			
I feel that I have few options to consider leaving this organization		.780	
Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.		.758	
One of the serious consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.		.728	
Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now		.694	
Factor 3: Normative Commitment			
Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now			.723
If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere			.688
If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere I would not feel it was right to leave my organization			.685
Percentage of Explained Variance	29.70	14.8	14.20
Total Variance			58.80
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sampling adequacy		.87	
Barttlet's test of sphrecity			1073.89*

*P<.001

3.2. Reliability Analyses

Cronbach-Alpha scores of scales and subscales are shown in Table 3. Scales internal consistencies are ranged from .81 to .90. All of the alpha scores for scales and subscales are found higher than .70 except for the subscale, normative organizational commitment. The reason of this low reliability might be due to the fact that research on organizational commitment has relevance mostly with North American context. This relevance is not only in terms of the samples investigated but also regarding the scales and constructs used (Randall, 1993). The instrument is composed of items reflecting Western conditions. This might affect the reliability of normative commitment in Turkish culture (Wasti, 2003).

Table 3. Reliability Coefficients of Scales and Subscales

Scale	Cronbach α
Perceived Organizational Support	. 88
Organizational Based Self-Esteem	.90
Organizational Commitment	.81
OBSE Self-Respect	.88
OBSE Self-Confidence	.87
Affective Organizational Commitment	.90
Continuance Organizational Commitment	.76
Normative Organizational Commitment	.61

3.3. Correlation Analysis

Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix were recalculated with the subscales found after the factor analyses and the other scales. Results are given in Table 4.

In the present study, firstly it was hypothesized that there would be a positive relationship between POS and OC. Findings showed a significant positive correlation between POS and Affective and Normative commitment

(affective commitment r = .68 p<.01; normative commitment r = .25 p<.01). Different from these positive correlations, a significant negative correlation was found between POS and Continuance Commitment (r = -.30 p<.01). Therefore, the first hypothesis of the study was confirmed.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix

Scales and Subscales	N	Mean	St. Dev.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Perceived Organizational Support	145	4.03	.81	—							
2 Organization Based Self-Esteem	144	4.34	.64	.47**	—						
3 Organizational Commitment	135	3.58	.62	.52**	.32**	—					
4 OBSE Self-Respect	147	4.10	.77	.50**	.86**	.17*	—				
5 OBSE Self-Confidence	145	4.50	.68	.37**	.92**	.38**	.61**	—			
6 Affective Commitment	144	3.75	.90	.68**	.44**	.87**	.34**	.44**	—		
7 Continuance Commitment	142	3.46	1.02	-.30**	-.18*	.20*	-.26**	-.09	-.24**	—	
8 Normative Commitment	143	3.15	.91	.25**	.10	.66**	.02	.15	.45**	.03	—

*P<0.05 **P<0.01

3.4. The Mediating Role of Organization Based Self-Esteem

In order to test the mediating role of OBSE, a three stage multiple regression analysis was used. First, the influence of the independent variable on the mediator was examined. Then, the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variables is analyzed in the second step. In the third step, the independent variable and the mediator are entered into the model together. If the mediating variable predicts the dependent variables significantly and the significance found in the first step of the analysis is found insignificant, mediating role of the mediator variable is partially accepted or if the independent variable disappears in the third step, then the mediating role is fully accepted. Results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Three Stage Multiple Regression Analysis

First Step Predictors	OBSE Self respect		OBSE Self Confidence
Perceived Support	.497***		.372***
R^2	.247		.138
Adjusted R^2	.242		.133
F Value	47.85***		23.46***

Second Step Predictors	Affective Commitment	Continuance Commitment	Normative Commitment
Perceived Support	.655***	-.295**	.249**
R^2	.429	.087	.062
Adjusted R^2	.425	.081	.055
F Value	109.82***	13.94**	9.63***

Third Step Predictors	Affective Commitment	Continuance Commitment	Normative Commitment
Perceived Support	.617***	-.231	.296**
OBSE Self-Respect	-.154	-.236*	-.226*
OBSE Self-Confidence	.307***	.144	.175*
R^2	.488	.118	.093
Adjusted R^2	.478	.100	.074
R^2 difference	.053	.019	.019
F Value	45.82***	6.43**	4.93**

*P<0,05 ** P < 0.01 ***P < 0.001

Three stage multiple regression analysis showed that OBSE has a full mediating role between perceived organizational support and continuance commitment. For affective commitment, it can be concluded that OBSE self confidence partially mediated the relationship between POS and affective organizational commitment. In the second step of the analysis, beta coefficient was found .655 (p<.001) and POS significantly predicted AC. However, in the third step the Beta coefficient of POS decreased to .617 (p<.001). Results also showed that OBSE has no significant mediating role between POS and normative commitment. Therefore, the hypothesis about the mediating role of OBSE was partially confirmed.

4. DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the mediating role of organization based self-esteem between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment. The relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment was also examined by correlation analysis. The mediating role was tested through a three stage regression analyses using a sample of white collar employees from a wide range of business sectors based on convenience sampling method.

As a result of the analysis, the first hypothesis concerning the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational commitment is supported. As it was expected, POS is strongly associated with affective commitment (r=.68 p<.001), which is consistent with previous studies conducted in similar organizational settings (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). When employees perceive value, care and support from their organization, they develop a sense of belonging and emotional attachment to the organization. For normative commitment, the results of the correlation analysis showed that there is a significant correlation between POS and normative organizational commitment (r=.25 p< .001). This relationship has also been supported by the similar findings in the literature (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, and Topolnytsky, 2002). The greater the extent to which employees perceive that the organization is giving them support, the more they feel a moral obligation to keep working for that organization. Since, they perceive they are supported and valued by their organization, they think that it is not moral to leave the organization. Consistent with previous literature, a negative correlation is found between POS and continuance commitment. This negative relationship is explained with the decrease of feelings of being stuck in the organization, when the employee thinks that the cost of leaving is influenced by the perceived organizational support. A high level of perceived organizational support may help to restore the balance between the positive reinforcements taken by the organization and the contributions of the individual (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Specifically, when individuals perceive high level of organizational support, the costs related to leaving the job will be perceived as less important than the thought that they had given a great deal to the organization without receiving anything in return (Aube, Rousseau and Morin, 2007).

The three stage multiple regression analysis provided partial mediation between POS and organizational commitment. Specifically, it was found that OBSE partially mediated affective commitment and fully mediated continuance

commitment. Moreover, OBSE did not play a mediating role between POS and normative commitment. As a result of the analyses, the second hypothesis of the study is partially supported. Results concerning affective and normative commitment indicate that there are other mechanisms through which POS has an impact on affective and normative organizational commitment. These may include non-OBSE related socio-emotional factors.

The existing literature indicates that OBSE mediates the relationship between POS and each dimension of organizational commitment (Chen, Aryee and Lee, 2005; Hughes and Palmer, 2007). For example; Kostova, Latham, Cummings and Hollingworth (1997) found that OBSE partially mediates the relationship between members' perceptions of their level of influence in the organization and their organizational commitment. Organizational scholars suggest that greater level of influence increases member self-esteem and subsequently their commitment to the organization. With respect to this, Phillips and Hall (2001) suggested that OBSE may provide insight into the process through which the influences of organizational support are produced. They also found in their study that OBSE mediates the relationship between perceived organizational support, and job performance, and affective and continuance commitment.

Moreover, Gardner, Pierce, Van Dyne and Cummings (2000) theorized that POS is a form of communication that signals to employees the degree to which the organization values them. This message, when internalized, becomes a part of the employee's organization-based self-esteem, which in turn motivates the employee to engage in behaviors that are consistent with the view of the self as organizationally competent, worthwhile, and valuable. These messages may also contribute to increase employees' emotional attachment, involvement and identification to the organization.

Leaders have an important role in this sense. They are the key persons to construct positive and productive working environment. They can improve their followers' self-esteem by giving support and vision. Over time employees with perceived support come to believe that they are significant worthy and valuable to the organization and this message becomes integrated into beliefs about the self (Gardner, Pierce, Van Dyne and Cummings, 2000).

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

Sample size is the major limitations of the study. 148 employees participated to this study. The sample size could be larger in order to get more

powerful results. Additionally, the sample was composed of variety of sectors. The sample could have been formed based on a specific business sector. Given that the variables were measured by using the same method at a single measurement time, the common method variance bias may have influenced the results (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee and Podsakoff, 2003). This bias should be minimized by using multiple methods and multiple sources.

This study is a correlational design and self reports were used as the only source of data. Self-reports are widely used in social sciences, but the nature of the data clearly did not permit a systematic causal analysis of the links between perceived organizational support, organization based self-esteem and organizational commitment. The future research may use a causal study design and longitudinal data and be able to draw cause and effect relationships between variables.

Future research could investigate more discrete dimensions of organizational support in order to achieve a finer understanding of the relationships between POS and organizational commitment. POS is usually considered as a uni-dimensional construct in the literature (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa, 2004). However, Osca, Urien, Gonzales-Camino, Martinez-Perez and Martinez-Perez (2005) recently developed a three-dimensional scale of POS including supervisory and colleague support, training and acknowledgement, and rewards. Future research may focus on this three dimensional perceived organizational support scale and provide fruitful results. Future research should also take organizational culture or climate as a variable because these variables may have important roles in fostering organization based self-esteem and also can be linked with organizational support.

Managerial Implications

It can be concluded that organization-based self-esteem plays a critical role in the motivation of human behaviors. Organizational policies, programs, and procedures that lead to the development of employee self-esteem in a healthy way will be very useful both for the organizational and the individual. Managers must have the mission to improve their employees' self-esteem in order to contribute to the achievement of organizational goals and as well as the personal goals of the members.

The results of this study suggest that managers should seek to increase the level of support given to the employees by the organization. By implementing policies, work processes, and fair reward systems that send signals to employees

that the organization cares about the employee's well-being and values his/her contributions, the company will both increase employee self-esteem as well as their level of organizational commitment.

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