



**INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED
ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT, SELF-EFFICACY AND BURNOUT**

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the relationship between perceived organizational support, self-efficacy and burnout. Data was collected from a sample of 120 employees (60 males and 60 females) between the ages of 25 - 45 using the Perceived Organizational Scale by Robert Eisenberger, and colleagues (1986), the General Self-Efficacy Scale by Ralf Schwarzer and Matthias Jerusalem (1989) and Maslach Burnout Inventory by Christina Maslach and Susan E. Jackson (1986). Spearman's Rank Correlation and Mann Whitney- U test were employed to test the hypotheses. The results indicated that Perceived Organizational Support is positively correlated with Self-Efficacy. Perceived Organizational Support had a significant

negative correlation with emotional exhaustion, a significant negative correlation with depersonalization, and a positive correlation with personal accomplishment. Self-efficacy had a non-significant correlation with emotional exhaustion, a negative correlation with depersonalization, and a positive correlation with personal accomplishment. Perceived Organizational Support was found to be non-significant as no gender difference existed, Self-efficacy was found to be significant indicating a significant gender difference where the male employees had a slightly higher self-efficacy than female employees, for the three dimensions of burnout, emotional exhaustion and depersonalization scores based on gender was found to be non-significant and personal accomplishment was found to be significant as gender difference exists, where male employees have a higher level of personal accomplishment.

Keywords: *Perceived Organizational Support, Self-Efficacy, Burnout, Employee.*

INTRODUCTION

Perceived organizational support (POS) is defined as the “employees' perceptions that the organization values their contributions and is concerned about their well-being” (Eisenberger et al. 1986). Employees who are emotionally dedicated to the organization perform better, have lower absenteeism, and are less likely to leave their jobs (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). In contrast, employees are often more concerned about the organization's commitment to them. Being appreciated by the organization can lead to rewards such as acceptance and respect, income and promotion, and access to information and other types of assistance required to perform one's job more effectively.

The Organisational Support Theory

This theory applies the reciprocity norm to employee-employer relationships (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). According to the theory, employees pay attention to how companies treat them in order to determine how supportive and valued their contribution is (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003). Further, the theory states that, based on the reciprocity norm, employees seek to repay the organization for its high degree of support by increasing their efforts to assist the organization achieve its goals (Scott, Restubog, & Zagenczyk, 2013). The Organizational Support Theory further suggests the development of POS depends on an employee's belief that organizations have human traits (Eisenberger et al., 1986). According to Eder and Eisenberger (2008), employees interpret the treatment they get from organizational agents as indicative of the organization's general positive or negative disposition towards them.

The Organisational Support Theory addresses the psychological effects of POS (Shoss et al., 2013). According to Eisenberger et al. (2001), the care, praise, and respect demonstrated by POS meet employee's socio-emotional needs, leading them to integrate membership and role status into their social identity. Furthermore, Eisenberger et al. (2001) found that POS strengthened employees' opinion that the organization recognises and rewards excellent performance (performance-reward expectancies).

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is an “individual's belief in their capacity to organize and carry out the actions required to complete a certain activity or achieve a desired goal” (Bandura, 1997). It relates to a person's beliefs, motivational abilities, cognitive resources, and the characteristics required to effectively do a task in a given environment (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). When a

person with high self-efficacy encounters a challenging situation, they attribute it to a lack of effort and continue to improve their abilities. Self-efficacy fosters an attitude of overcoming rather than giving up, especially in tough situations, and it encourages a demanding reaction to achieve excellent work performance. Individuals with low self-efficacy, on the other hand, believe that their skills and abilities are insufficient to attain their objectives, so they avoid or give up, even when the work is simple (Sherer et al., 1982; Schmidt & DeShon, 2010).

Social Cognitive Theory helps predict behaviour (Bandura, 2012). It is also an approach to learning and transformation (Bandura, 2012). The learning component of the theory describes how people acquire information structures: cognitive, emotional, behavioural, and social (Bandura, 1997). The theory encompasses a variety of elements that help regulate and motivate actions. Self-efficacy is the main point since it directly impacts behaviour and influences additional factors such as result expectations, targets, and environment (Bandura, 2012). Employees acquire information through learning events, which may influence their behaviour. The impact on behaviour may affect the employee's outcomes, goals, and surroundings (environment).

Perceived Organizational Support & Self-Efficacy:

POS and self-efficacy are key factors for explaining employee experiences, actions, and results in the workplace. They are interrelated and impact one another, therefore improving employee job satisfaction, performance, and the organization's success. Employees who report receiving more support from the organization have greater levels of self-efficacy. Employees who receive good support from their employer may feel more secure in their ability to work well, manage job demands successfully, and overcome

problems. In contrast, low levels of POS may weaken employees' self-efficacy beliefs, resulting in lower motivation, performance, and well-being.

POS leads to favourable results for employees like improved performance, commitment, and positive emotions. Employee's belief in their abilities is influenced by perceived organizational support, which enhances self-efficacy (Igbaria & Iivari, 1995; Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli & Lynch, 1997) Furthermore, POS enhanced organizational commitment, self-efficacy, in-role behavior, and OCB (Organizational Citizenship Behavior), which reduced job stress, burnout, and intention to leave (Kurtessis, Eisenberger, Ford, Buffardi, Stewart & Adis, 2017; Riggle, Edmondson & Hansen, 2009). Additionally, empirical research has shown that POS affects self-efficacy, which is linked to job performance (Chen, Rockow, Kowalski & Smothers, 2016; Islam & Ahmed, 2019).

Burnout

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality defines burnout as "a long-term stress reaction marked by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a lack of sense of personal accomplishment." Burnout is caused by continuous stress in the workplace and an imbalance between job requirements and employee's perceived skills or abilities (Brown, 2012; Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). Burnout is an ongoing problem in human services industries and has been associated with employee's poor (well-being) mental and physical health (Maslach et al., 2001). Employee burnout has been associated with decreased productivity, absenteeism, poor organizational commitment, and high staff turnover, all of which lead to diminished service and financial/monetary losses for the employer organization (Lingard, 2003).

Maslach's Theory of Burnout

Burnout is a loss of emotional energy (exhaustion), decreased compassion and empathy for clients (depersonalization), and dissatisfaction with one's profession (Morse, 2012). Burnout has three dimensions; exhaustion, depersonalization, and inefficacy (reduced personal accomplishment) (Maslach, Schaufli & Leiter, 2001). Exhaustion is the core characteristic of burnout and the most commonly reported and evaluated attribute. Emotional tiredness/exhaustion is characterized by both mental and physical fatigue. Though, exhaustion represents stress, it does not describe people's relationship with their jobs. In the field of human services, fatigue can influence the services that are provided to clients. In the second level, depersonalization, people detach themselves from others to avoid exhaustion and disappointment (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). Distancing is an instant reaction to exhaustion and has been associated with cynicism (Maslach et al. 2001). The third component is inefficacy, which refers to a lack of personal accomplishment. Furthermore, personal accomplishment involves feeling inefficient and inadequate. A work environment with excessive demands can result in exhaustion, depersonalization, and feelings of inadequacy.

Perceived Organizational Support & Burnout

Perceived organizational support helps prevent employees from burnout by giving them resources, creating a supportive work atmosphere, and encouraging well-being. Organizations that focus creating a culture of support, encouragement and appreciation are more likely to witness decreased burnout and higher employee engagement and performance.

Kilfedder, Power, and Wells (2001) provided more evidence for the link between burnout and POS, indicating that employees who reported a low level of social support also exhibited symptoms related with the burnout aspects of cynicism and exhaustion. Thus, in

this study, a negative association was expected between these two aspects of burnout and POS, indicating that employees who view their organization to be unsupportive and unappreciative are more prone to experience experiences of exhaustion and cynicism. A positive link was expected between burnout's personal efficacy component and POS, showing that employees with high levels of POS had high levels of personal efficacy.

Self-efficacy and its associations with Burnout

Apart from highlighting the broad range of negative effects of work-related stress, researchers and professionals have begun to urge for an analysis of protective variables (Kay-Eccles, 2012; Voss Horrell, Holohan, Didion, & Vance, 2011). These protective factors could be workplace characteristics (e.g., organizational structure, safety standards) or individual variables (e.g., self-efficacy, age, optimism) that have been linked to burnout (Alarcon et al., 2009; Lee, Seo, Hladkyj, Lowell, & Schwartzmann, 2013). Environmental features or individual difference factors (such as organizational structures or age) are difficult to modify (see Voss Horrell et al., 2011). On the contrary, cognitions like self-efficacy are changeable protective variables. According to social cognitive theory, self-efficacy relates to individual beliefs about their abilities to regulate difficult situations (Bandura, 1997). In the context of occupational stress, self-efficacy refers to the belief that one possesses the abilities required to do job-specific activities and deal with job-specific difficulties, job-related stress, and its repercussions.

METHODS

Purpose

The study aimed to investigate and understand the relationship between perceived organizational support, self-efficacy and burnout and the differences in perceived organizational support, self-efficacy and burnout between males and females.

Research Objectives

- To explore the relationship between perceived organizational support and self-efficacy.
- To explore the relationship between perceived organizational support and emotional exhaustion.
- To explore the relationship between perceived organizational support and depersonalization.
- To explore the relationship between perceived organizational support and personal accomplishment.
- To explore the relationship between self-efficacy and emotional exhaustion.
- To explore the relationship between self-efficacy and depersonalization.
- To explore the relationship between self-efficacy and personal accomplishment.
- To study gender differences in the relationship between perceived organizational support, self-efficacy, and burnout (exhaustion, depersonalization, personal accomplishment) in males and females.

Hypothesis

- There will be a significant relationship between perceived organizational support and self-efficacy.
- There will be a significant relationship between perceived organizational support and emotional exhaustion.
- There will be a significant relationship between perceived organizational support and depersonalization.
- There will be a significant relationship between perceived organizational support and personal accomplishment.
- There will be a significant relationship between self-efficacy and emotional exhaustion.
- There will be a significant relationship between self-efficacy and depersonalization.
- There will be a significant relationship between self-efficacy and personal accomplishment.
- There will be a significant difference in levels of perceived organizational support, self-efficacy, and burnout (exhaustion, depersonalization, personal accomplishment) among males and females.

Sample

A sample of 120 (60 males and 60 females) corporate employees from India was selected. All are between the age range of 25 to 45 years at the time of study. The sampling method used for this is snowball and purposive sampling methods.

Inclusion Criteria

- Participants who are currently working in a corporate setting in India.
- Only full-time employees were selected.
- Participants who have worked for a minimum of 6 months to one year.
- The age range should be between 25 and 40 years.
- The participants should voluntarily agree to participate and give informed consent.
- Participants must be fluent in the English language to collect data.

Exclusion Criteria

- Individuals who are below the age of 18 years.
- Individuals who are unemployed, self-employed, interns, and part-timers were not considered for this study.
- Recent employment- employees who have been with the firm for less than 6 months.
- Individuals with cognitive disabilities or conditions that hinder their capacity to comprehend and respond to survey questions will be excluded.

Measures

Perceived Organizational Support Scale: The scale as developed by Robert Eisenberger, along with colleagues (1986). This scale describes how much employees believe their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. It evaluates the subjective experience of support from the organization. It consists of 17 items where the responses range from 1 to 7, 1 means “strongly disagree” and 7 means “strongly agree”. The original version of SPOS is a 36-item questionnaire. Eisenberger and colleagues (1986)

conducted a factor and item analysis on the initial item and reduced it to 17 with the reliability coefficient alpha values ranging from .74 to .95 and item-total correlations ranging from .47 to .83. He performed content and construct on the scale to further re-establish the validity. Among the 17 items, 10 items were positively scored (1,3,7,8,9,11,12,15,16,17) and 7 items were reverse scored (2,3,5,6,10,13,14)

General Self-Efficacy Scale constructed and prepared by Ralf Schwarzer and Matthias Jerusalem (1989). This scale assesses the beliefs of individuals about their ability to cope with a variety of challenges and stresses in life. It is a 10-item self-report scale in which the responses range from 1 to 4 where 1 means “not at all true” and 4 means “exactly true”. The Internal reliability for this scale is found to be Cronbach’s alphas between .76 and .90. It has good content and construct validity since the items were carefully designed to reflect the concept of self-efficacy. It has also been shown that it correlates with various measures of self-efficacy.

Maslach Burnout Inventory by Christina Maslach and Susan E. Jackson (1986) is a 22-item scale. It assesses 3 three characteristics of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment, in individuals, especially in the context of a workplace. Each item is assessed on a Likert scale, which ranges from 0 to 6, where 0 equals “never”, 3 equals “several times a month” and 6 equals “every day”. The Cronbach alpha of the scale is found to be .71 to .90 and the test-retest reliability of .80. It has convergent validity coefficients that range from .20 to .56 when it was correlated with peer rating scores for different samples. However, Coker (1999) discovered an alpha of .86, split-half reliability of .57, and concurrent validity ranging from -.01 to .36 when MBI subscales were associated with Omoluabi's (1987) psychological symptoms checklist.

Procedure

The questionnaire was administered to 120 full-time corporate employees. The questionnaire was filled in by individuals between the ages of 25 to 45 years through offline mode. The purpose of this research study was explained and the participant was informed of the confidentiality and voluntary nature of participation. Demographics were collected and the participants were requested to be as honest as possible. The data was collected and scoring was done using MS Excel and SPSS.

Statistical Analysis

Data was analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation, Spearman's Rank Correlation and Mann Whitney- U test using SPSS software.

RESULTS

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Variables	N	Mean	SD
Perceived Organizational Support	120	75.27	17.03
Self-Efficacy	120	29.93	5.76
Emotional Exhaustion (B)	120	20.83	11.02
Depersonalization (B)	120	9.47	6.37

Personal Accomplishment (B)	120	28.00	9.09
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Table 2*Correlation between Perceived Organizational Support and Self-Efficacy*

Variable	N	Self-Efficacy	Sig. (2-tailed)
Perceived Organizational Support	120	0.452**	0.000

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3*Correlation between Perceived Organizational Support and Burnout Dimensions*

Variables	N	Emotional Exhaustion	Depersonalization	Personal Accomplishment
Perceived Organizational Support	120	-0.429**	-0.504**	0.302**
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.001

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 4*Correlation between Self-Efficacy and Burnout Dimensions*

Variables	N	Emotional Exhaustion	Depersonalization	Personal Accomplishment
Self-Efficacy	120	-0.120	-0.314**	0.629**
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.190	0.000	0.000

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5*Descriptive Statistics and Differences in Study Variables between Male and Female Participants*

Variables	Males			Females			Mann-Whitney U test
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	
Perceived Organizational Support	60	74.75	17.82	60	75.78	16.35	0.943
Self-Efficacy	60	30.98	5.96	60	28.88	5.39	0.047**
Emotional Exhaustion (B)	60	21.08	12.18	60	20.58	9.83	0.642
Depersonalization (B)	60	9.83	6.49	60	9.10	6.27	0.513
Personal Accomplishment	60	29.93	9.33	60	26.07	8.47	0.007**

(B)

**. $p < 0.05$ (2-tailed)

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to investigate and understand the relationship between perceived organizational support, self-efficacy and burnout of employees on a sample of 120 full-time employees, where special emphasis was placed on the three dimensions of burnout, namely, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment.

Eight hypotheses were drawn for this research. The **first hypothesis** stated that “there will be a significant relationship between perceived organizational support and self-efficacy”. Spearman’s Rank Correlation was introduced to analyze the results. The ‘r’ value 0.452 was obtained for POS and self-efficacy and was found to be significant, depicting a moderate positive correlation between POS and self-efficacy. Hence, the hypothesis was accepted. This result is supported by the findings of the research study conducted by Conoras, Parimita, and Handaru (2021) where the results state a positive and significant impact of POS and Self-efficacy on work engagement.

The **second hypothesis** stated that “there will be a significant relationship between perceived organizational support and emotional exhaustion” was proven to be accurate as the ‘r’ value of -0.429 was obtained is significant. POS has a significant and moderate negative correlation with emotional exhaustion. According to the findings by Özyer, Berk and Polatcı (2016) revealed that POS had a negative effect on emotional exhaustion.

The **third hypothesis** drawn for this research stated that “there will be a significant relationship between perceived organizational support and depersonalization” was proven to be accurate. The ‘r’ value of -0.504 was obtained is significant. POS has a significant moderately strong negative correlation with depersonalization. This result is supported by the

findings of Özyer, Berk and Polatçı (2016) demonstrated that POS had a significant negative effect on depersonalization.

The **fourth hypothesis** was that “there will be a significant relationship between perceived organizational support and personal accomplishment”. The ‘r’ value of 0.302 was found to be significant, indicating a positive correlation between POS and personal accomplishment. The positive correlation is supported by a previous study conducted by Walters and Raybould (2007).

The **fifth hypothesis** stated that “there will be a significant relationship between self-efficacy and emotional exhaustion”. The ‘r’ value -0.120 is insignificant. This can be interpreted as self-efficacy does not have any significant impact on emotional exhaustion. Hence, the hypothesis was not accepted. Blevins (2021) conducted a study on burnout among teachers where the correlation results showed that SE and emotional exhaustion were not significant. The data analysis implies that emotional exhaustion did not influence self-efficacy scores, regardless of how high or low a teacher's self-efficacy was.

The **sixth hypothesis** stated that “there will be a significant relationship between self-efficacy and depersonalization” was proven to be accurate. The r value -0.314 obtained is significant. Self-efficacy indicates a moderate negative correlation with depersonalization. This result is supported by the findings of the research study conducted by Aftab, Shah and Mehmood (2012) in which results revealed a significant negative relationship between SE and depersonalization.

The **seventh hypothesis** was that “there will be a significant relationship between self-efficacy and personal accomplishment”. The results support this hypothesis. The r value of 0.629 obtained is found to be significant. Self-efficacy indicates a strong positive correlation

with personal accomplishment. The result is supported by the previous study done by Aftab, Shah and Mehmood (2012).

The *eighth hypothesis* stated that “there will be a significant difference in levels of perceived organizational support, self-efficacy, and burnout (exhaustion, depersonalization, personal accomplishment) among males and females”. Mann Whitney- U test was employed to study the gender differences. The ‘U’ score obtained for POS was 0.943. This score was found to be non-significant as no gender difference exists between males and females. This result is supported by the findings of Yoshimura (2003). The ‘U’ score obtained for self-efficacy 0.047 was found to be significant, depicting a significant gender difference where the male group tends to have a slightly higher self-efficacy than females. Smetackova (2017) did a study on self-efficacy and burnout syndrome in teachers and the results showed that men had higher self-efficacy scores than women. The ‘U’ score of 0.642, 0.513 and 0.007 was obtained for the three dimensions of burnout i.e., emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment. The score of 0.642 for emotional exhaustion and 0.513 for depersonalization was found to be non-significant.

Fardous and Afzal (2022) worked on the Role of Emotional Exhaustion towards Depersonalization Among Teachers. The findings showed that there is no significant difference between genders in terms of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization in teachers. Emotional exhaustion and depersonalization affect both male and female teachers equally. The score of 0.007 for personal accomplishment was found to be a significant difference between males and females where the males have a higher level of personal accomplishment than females. This result is supported by the findings of the research study conducted by Guthrie and Jones III (2012) on Job Burnout in Public Accounting: Exploring Gender Differences, where women experience a greater degree of reduced personal accomplishment. Thus, this hypothesis has only been partially accepted.

The current study helps to understand workplace dynamics, especially in terms of perceived organizational support, self-efficacy, and burnout among employees. Burnout is a common problem in many workplaces and may have negative consequences for both individuals and companies. The study gives insight into how organizational practices and individual attitudes might affect employee performance, productivity and well-being by looking into these issues. Workplaces can better adjust their policies and host training sessions to ensure that the employees are the best fit for their work in all aspects.

CONCLUSION

The study aimed to investigate and understand the relationship between perceived organizational support, self-efficacy and burnout and the gender differences. The results revealed that perceived organizational support is positively correlated with self-efficacy. Perceived organizational support has a significant and moderate negative correlation with emotional exhaustion, a significant moderately strong negative correlation with depersonalization and is positively correlated with personal accomplishment. Self-efficacy has an insignificant relation with emotional exhaustion, a moderate negative correlation with depersonalization and a strong positive correlation with personal accomplishment, Spearman's Rank Correlation was employed to analyze the results. Mann Whitney- U test was introduced to study gender differences and the findings suggest that perceived organizational support was found to be non-significant as no gender difference exists, self-efficacy was found to be significant indicating a significant gender difference where the men have a slightly higher self-efficacy than women, for the three dimensions of burnout, emotional exhaustion and depersonalization scores based on gender was found to be non-

significant and personal accomplishment was found to be significant as gender difference exists, where men have a higher level of personal accomplishment.

Limitations

- The sample size was too small to make a true representation of the population.
- Taking a combination of qualitative and quantitative data would enhance the substance of the research and provide an in-depth understanding of all three variables.
- Limited geographical area and cross-cultural differences as the research study was conducted within India.

Future Implications

- To gain a true representation of the population a large-scale study needs to be conducted.
- The sample of the study was corporate employees, it can also consider employees from various other sectors.
- To prevent burnout, employers should show appreciation for their employees. Organizations should prioritize creating a pleasant and comfortable work atmosphere, improving working conditions, valuing the perspectives of employees, appreciating their success, and giving them rewards.

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