

## **The Impact of Perceived Organizational Support on Job Satisfaction of Academic Staff**

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### **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author NT designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol and first draft of the manuscript. Author YS managed the analyses of the study and managed the literature searches. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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### **ABSTRACT**

An empirical knowledge gap has been observed regarding the relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction of academic staff in Eastern University, Sri Lanka. Therefore, in order to fill this empirical knowledge gap, this study was carried out with the objectives of finding out the levels of perceived organizational support and job satisfaction, explores the relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction and explores the impact of perceived organization support on job satisfaction of academic staff in Eastern University, Sri Lanka. The data of this study have been collected from 141 academic staff in Eastern University, Sri Lanka through the structured questionnaire. The disproportionate stratified sampling method was used. The data were analysed with univariate and bivariate analyses using SPSS 19.0.

The findings of the study suggested that there is a high level of perceived organizational support provided to the academic staff by the university and academic staff of the university highly satisfied

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with their job. And also findings of the study stated that there is a strong positive relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction. This study suggested that perceived organizational support of the organization can improve employees' job satisfaction.

*Keywords: Perceived organizational support; job satisfaction; academic staff.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Recently, a great attention has been paid by organizations to enhance the organization's sustainability. Jabbour and Santhos [1] argued that human resource management (HRM) plays a central role in achieving organization's sustainability. In an organizational context, employees are viewed as the significant actors in determining the organizational sustainability [2]. Prince [3] also stated that employees are important stakeholders and a distinct resource that cannot be managed as any other resources and whose interests and needs have been taken into consideration in order to achieve the organization's goals and objectives. In today's competitive business environment, keeping efficient employees enable the organization to be successful. Therefore, organizations make their every effort to invite their employees to be part of sustainability. In this context, organizations focus on improving employees' commitment, satisfaction, engagement, knowledge development to increase their contribution to organization's success.

In this context employees' job satisfaction plays a crucial role in organization's performance. Global studies have been shown a strong correlation between employee job satisfaction and organization's performance. Job satisfaction implies doing a job one enjoys, doing it well and being rewarded for one's efforts. Job satisfaction further implies enthusiasm and happiness with one's work. Job Satisfaction is the key ingredient that leads to recognition, income, promotion, and the achievement of other goals that lead to a feeling of fulfilment [4]. Target and achievement depend on employee satisfaction and in turn contribute to organizational success and growth that enhances the productivity and increases the quality of work [5]. Further, employee satisfaction is closely related to service quality and customer satisfaction which is then related to firm profitability [6]. Employee satisfaction impacts on quality at the industry, to achieve quality and profitability at organization, employee satisfaction is fundamental and without it, organization cannot think of being successful [5].

In this sense, perceived organizational support plays a significant role in determining job satisfaction of employees. According to organizational support theory, employees form global beliefs about the extent to which their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being [7,8]. These beliefs, known as perceived organizational support, operate on various psychological processes to affect workplace attitudes and behaviours. Employees who perceive their organization to be supportive of them are likely to view their work environment as less threatening, allowing the attainment of job goals and values that help fulfil their needs. Perceived organizational support should strengthen employees' beliefs that the organization recognizes and rewards increased performance. These processes should have favourable outcomes both for employees (e.g., increased job satisfaction and heightened positive mood) and for the organization (e.g., increased affective commitment and performance, reduced turnover). Rhoades and Eisenberger [8], and several authors studied the relationship between organizational support and job satisfaction [9,10,11]. Because, job satisfaction results from the appraisal of one's job as attaining or allowing the attainment of job values that help fulfil one's needs [12], employees who perceive their organization to be supportive of them will experience job satisfaction. In contrast, employees who perceive their organization to be unconcerned about their needs fulfilment and well-being are likely to view their work environment as one that is not conducive to the attainment of job goals and values and, consequently, feel dissatisfied. Finally, the feeling of being supported by the organization may generate among employees feelings of being favoured by the organization, comfort, personal worth, and competence that, in turn, give rise to positive mood [13], and positive mood has been found to be positively related to job satisfaction [14].

Based on above research background, this research study explores the relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction at Eastern University, Sri Lanka".

## 2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

Employee satisfaction plays a considerable role in enhancing the firm profitability and improving the operational performance of organization and quality of good and services. If an employee satisfied with the work he/she performs, it will be more likely for her/him to continue her/his career within her/his current organization. Thus, job satisfaction is an important aspect for organizations [15]. There is no doubt in it that employee satisfaction is critical to attain quality and profitability in organization. In this context, several researchers argued that there is a positive relationship between perceived organization support and job satisfaction of employees [16,11]. Employees who perceive their organization to be supportive of them will experience job satisfaction. Employees who perceive a high level of organizational support are more likely to feel an obligation to repay the organization [7].

In this context, especially in Sri Lanka, the higher education industry is growing and universities are considered as the key players in the industry. Academic Staff plays crucial role in universities' performance. But there is a gap in the empirical knowledge in the impact of perceived organizational support in job satisfaction in academic staff. As far as Sri Lanka is concerned theoretical arguments or empirical research findings regarding the relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction of academic staff in universities are hardly seen. Therefore, in considering all the above reasons, researcher would like to conduct this study in order to fulfill the empirical research gap regarding the relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction of academic staff in Eastern University, Sri Lanka. Hence, the objectives of this study are to identify the level of perceived organizational support to academic staff in Eastern University, Sri Lanka, identify the level of job satisfaction of academic staff in Eastern University, Sri Lanka and explore the relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction of academic staff in Eastern University, Sri Lanka.

This article is structured as follows. The next section presents the review of the relevant literature about the perceived organizational support and job satisfaction and proposes the hypothesis; the third section provides the methodology of this study. Next, we present the

findings and discussion of the study and finally, it ends up with the conclusion.

## 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 3.1 The Relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Job Satisfaction

Nowadays, organizations focus chiefly on the sustainability of the organizations. Employees of the organization play a prominent role in determining the sustainability of the organization. Therefore, organizations implement several practices and procedures in order to retain the employees. In this context, job satisfaction of employees is absolutely necessary in determining the success and failure of the organizations. Thus, organizations focus on improving the job satisfaction of the employees to achieve the organizational goals and objectives. Moreover, job satisfaction of employees are determined by several factors such as salary, working environment, autonomy, communication, and organizational commitment [17].

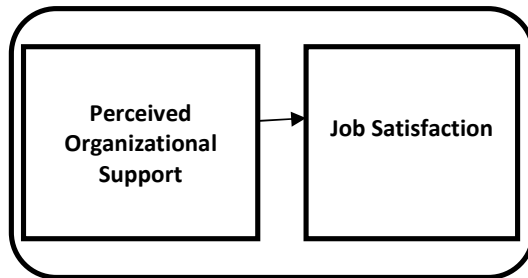
In this context, researchers argued that perceived organizational support plays a key role in determining the job satisfaction of the employees [18,11,19]. Perceived organizational support is a measure of employer commitment and set of beliefs about how much the organization cares for the staff's well-being, whereas job satisfaction focuses on different sides or viewpoints of work and is the affective response to these different aspects of work situation.

A number of studies among various types of employees including nurses [20], sales people [11] and part time employees [10], have all demonstrated a positive and significant relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction. The research evidence suggested that perceived organizational support highly contributes to the job satisfaction of employees [21]. In addition to that, Ahmad [22] stated that there is a positive relationship exists between the perceived organizational support and job satisfaction. Moreover, perceived organizational support has been hypothesized to influence employees' general affective reactions to their job, including job satisfaction and positive mood [23]. According to Zumrah & Boyle [24] there is a positive relationship between perceived

organizational support and job satisfaction. Based on the above-cited evidence researcher concluded that perceived organizational support is positively related to job satisfaction.

*Hypothesis 1: Perceived Organizational support is positively related to job satisfaction.*

Hence, based on the review, this study proposes a conceptual framework that shows the relationship between perceived and job satisfaction.(see Fig. 1)



**Fig.1. Conceptual Framework**

Source: Paille & Boiral, [21]; Zumrah & Boyle, [24]

## 4. METHODS

### 4.1 Sampling and Data Collection

This study has been carried out in the Faculties of Eastern University, Sri Lanka. There are four faculties functioning in Eastern University, Vantharumoolai area, namely Faculty of Commerce and Management, Faculty of Science, Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Agriculture. All four faculties have been selected for this study.

The total population for the study was 188 academic staff in Eastern University, Sri Lanka. Out of these 141 Academic Staff were selected as sample to conduct this research by using disproportionate stratified sampling method, because to assure representation of all grade academic staff belonging to different Faculties in Eastern University, Sri Lanka to measure the impact of perceived organizational job satisfaction.

This study depends on primary data. The data of this study were collected from the respondents through the structured questionnaire. In order to ensure the content validity of the scale used, it is advised to largely adopt the items for each

construct from prior research works [25]. Hence, all 40 question items related to this study were adapted from prior research works. The questionnaire contained questions relating to perceived organizational support and job satisfaction.

### 4.2 Measures

All constructs were measured with multiple items developed and tested in previous studies. Each item was measured on a five point Likert-type scale anchored by 'strongly disagree' and 'strongly agree' response options.

Perceived organizational support measured by the instrument of the survey of perceived organizational support (SPOS) developed by Eisenberger and Huntington [7]. For this study purpose sixteen question items selected from SPOS which have cronbach alpha value above 0.70. This instrument had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89 which is higher than 0.70. Hence, this instrument had a good reliability. To measure the job satisfaction, twenty four question items were used from past research works of Bas and Ardic [26]. The instrument had a good degree of reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.87.

### 4.3 Data Analysis Techniques

Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the variables [27]. According to Sekaran [28], the correlation coefficient value (r) range from 0.10 to 0.29 is considered as weak, from 0.30 to 0.49 is considered as medium and from 0.50 to 1.0 is considered as strong. However, according to Field [29], correlation coefficient should not go beyond 0.8 to avoid multicollinearity. The correlation analysis shows that multicollinearity does not threaten the validity of the data.

Simple Linear Regression was used to measure the impact of the independent variable on a dependent variable. The regression coefficient (represented by  $R^2$ ) can take on any value between 0 and 1. It measures how much the dependent variable varies with an independent variable when all other independent variables are held constant. Therefore, simple linear regression was used to measure the impact of perceived organizational support on job

**Table 1. Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix**

Variables	Mean	SD	1
1 Perceived organizational support	<b>3.55</b>	<b>0.90</b>	
2 Job satisfaction	<b>3.85</b>	<b>0.89</b>	<b>0.662**</b>

Notes: N=108, \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), \*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); Source: Survey data

satisfaction of academic staff in Eastern University, Sri Lanka.

## 5. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

### 5.1 Profile of the Respondents

In the survey, the gender distribution of the respondents is 49.6 percent males and 50.4 percent females. Out of 141 respondents who participated and responded to the questionnaire, 22.7% of respondents were from Faculty of Commerce and Management, 29.8% of respondents were from Faculty of Art and Culture, 14.9% of respondents were from Faculty of Agriculture and 32.6% of respondents were from Faculty of Science. The results revealed that the respondents are young, with 44 percent below and 30 years. In terms of job position of the respondents, 50.4% of them were Senior Lecturers, 12.1% of them were Lecturers, 20.6% of them were Assistant Lecturers and 17% of them were Demonstrators.

### 5.2 Correlation Analysis

Table 1 displays the correlation and descriptive statistics for all variables tested in the study. The descriptive statistics of the study suggest that there is high level of perceived organizational support provided to the academic staff. The results also imply that there is high level of job satisfaction exist among the academic staff with mean scores from 3.55 to 3.85 out of 5. Correlation analysis illustrates that perceived organizational support has a strong positive correlation with job satisfaction.

### 5.3 Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Table 2 shows the results of simple linear regression analysis. The model summary of simple linear regression shows, R (0.642) is correlation coefficient between the independent variable and dependent variable. It says that there is a strong positive correlation between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction. Adjusted R square is 0.434. Therefore, researchers can conclude that 43% of

the variability in job satisfaction is accounted by the perceived organizational support. In other words, 57% of variance of job satisfaction was affected by other variables.

**Table 2. Model summary of impact of perceived organizational support on job satisfaction**

Mode	R	R square	Adjusted R square
1	.642 <sup>a</sup>	.438	.434

a .Predictors: (constant), Perceived organizational support; b .Dependent variable: Job satisfaction  
Source: Survey data

## 6. DISCUSSION

Specifically in Sri Lanka, the higher education industry is growing and universities are considered as the key players in the industry. knowledge generation and dissemination, producing graduates and engaging in upgrading the general society are recognized as key roles of a university. These key roles are used to enhance the profile of a university. In producing a performance of a university, academic staff plays a critical role of a university since they directly involve and drive the key roles of the university. Therefore, this study carried out at Eastern University, Sri Lanka, in order to, broadens the understandings regarding the impact of perceived organizational support on job satisfaction of the academic staff.

The results of the study have shown a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction. In an organizational context, perceived organizational support is considered as the crucial factor to increase the job satisfaction of employees. Without providing perceived organizational support, satisfying the employees becomes unrealistic. Hence, organizations should consider more on providing the adequate organizational support to improve the job satisfaction of employees which in turn leads to improve the employees' as well as overall organizational performance. This finding is consistent with previous research that

indicated high perceived organizational support can increase employees' job Satisfaction [19;10, 20,11,21,24].

As in the presented literature review, highly satisfied employees will improve the positive outcomes such as high performance, reduced turnover, productivity, organizational commitment loyalty. The findings in this study suggested that the perceived organizational support has a reliable positive impact on job satisfaction. When employees perceive their organization values in their contribution and care about them as individuals, their level of job satisfaction increases. Therefore, Universities should be encouraged to make every effort to ensure that they always demonstrate adequate support for their academic staff in order to develop such positive beliefs in their employees. Universities can demonstrate their support to employees through a number of practices such as caring about employees' opinions and well-being, being considerate of their individual career goals, valuing their contributions, providing assistance to them when needed, being forgiving for their honest mistakes and not taking advantage of them [7]. Hence, university should consider more on providing adequate support to the academic staff in order to improve their performance which in turns leads to improve the quality of higher education of the country.

## 7. CONCLUSION

This study concluded that there is a high level of perceived organizational support provided to the academics. Findings also suggested that academics highly satisfied with their job. Moreover, findings of the study revealed that there is a strong positive relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction.

## 8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Any research study has the limitations. Likewise, this study also has the limitations such as (1) this study is a cross-sectional study. (2) The research used the academic staff members of Eastern University, Sri Lanka. Therefore, the results of the study cannot be generalized to the university system in Sri Lanka. (3) The information was collected from issuing closed type of questionnaire with limited number of questions and statements. And the study focuses on five point Likert's scale and result can be endorsed much, while using extended scale over 5. (4)

Sometime, the academic staff was unable to respond in proper way due to lack of time and risk avoidance attitudes and limitation of data collection. The questionnaire method has been used as primary data collection method. So, there may be error in the collected data because the academic staff may have perceived the question in wrong way and (5) It is found continuous observation and data collection is impossible.

## 9. FUTURE DIRECTIONS OF THE STUDY

In this research perceived organizational Support dimensions were measured from the individual academic members. This may prevent getting a true picture of perceived organizational support of an individual member since there can be tendency of giving social responsible answers. Therefore, it is prudent to measure the perceived organizational support to an academic staff from the perspectives of department heads and peers in addition to the self-rating. The current study only uses the quantitative method to carry out the research. Therefore future studies further use the qualitative and quantitative method to get the deeper results. Longitudinal research would further improve our understandings regarding the relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction. Further, it is possible to include some additional factors such as organizational justice, job involvement, organizational values and psychological empowerment. The current study only focus on the impact perceived organizational support on job satisfaction. The future studies can focus the impact of perceived organizational support on other related variables such as employee engagement, turn over intension, career development and organizational commitment. Finally, the study can be replicated in other Universities of Sri Lanka, private sector Universities, and also other sectors. This enables generalizing the findings to Sri Lankan context.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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