

The Role of Organizational Support in Mediating Work Performance: A Case Study of UBL

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Abstract

The managerial thought concerning human relation with organization argues that employees' performance is directly proportional to the improvement in their employment relationship. Social exchange theorist (Eisenberger et al., 1997) studied organizational support to explain positive impacts on employee's work place attitudes and behaviors in their role performance, turnover intentions and withdrawal behaviors. In order to explore this phenomenon this case study was conducted in a local bank i.e. UBL in a service industry. This report presents a qualitative research describing the role of organizational support and its constructive effects on the employee's performance. Intentionally this study was delimited to focus only four contributing factors of organizational support i-e Fairness, Supervisor Support, Organizational Reward and Job Conditions to explain how do they mediate and improve the employee's performance in UBL. Primary and Secondary Data has been gathered through questionnaires and interviews. Survey results have shown a strong opinion about the role of supervisor support, rewards, job condition and fairness that can contribute in increasing employee's performance in UBL.

Keywords: Organizational support, work performance, employee commitment.

1. Introduction

In order to obtain the optimal performance from the workforce, firms are increasingly trying to develop their human resource practices. By effectively utilizing their human resources, firms can gain a strategic competitive advantage (O'Reilly & Pfeffer, 2000), and become more competitive in the global market. By showing concern and support for their employees, organizations can obtain the best performance from their workers.

Research has shown that when employees feel supported by their organization, they will return the support by engaging in behaviors which are desired by the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Employees who feel valued by their organization will actively pursue the organization's goals (Eisenberger et al., 1990), reduced absenteeism, increased organizational citizenship behaviors (Shore & Wayne, 1993), will display productive workplace behaviors such as increased job involvement and will have lower rates of turnover (D. G. Allen, 2003).

1.1. Research Problem

It is commonly known that employees' work performance is often related to organizational intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Unless organization initiates employees support programs materially and socially for their welfare and wellbeing, there is a tendency that employees will not feel valued by the organization and they will neither be engaged in their jobs nor they will be committed with their organization. By reviewing the literature and researcher's personal findings, it is observed that organizational support is often appeared to be very effective tool to motivate and retain employees. This study is conducted to obtain a clear understanding about the role of organizational support in mediating with the employees' work performance in UBL.

1.2. Research Questions

To what extent do UBL policies and practices comprise organizational support for the employees and does it suppose to be necessary for high performance?

1.3. Objective of the study

This study intends to explore the organizational support programs in UBL. This study will be helpful in identifying specific area in work environment that need organizational support to bring positive effect on employees performance. This study will be helpful in providing essential information about how much employees give regard to organizational support i.e. Job fairness, Job Condition, Reward, Supervisor Support.

1.4. Significance of the Study

It will explain how best UBL can get optimal performance from their work force by effectively utilizing organizational support programs. This study will be very helpful for the organizations to motivate and retain their employees and to reduce organization's problems like absenteeism, turnover, low performance and demotivation etc.

1.5. Research Methodology

1.5.1 Research Design

This research is descriptive in nature and explains the process and practice of organizational support programs, specifically in UBL. This research is a case study and emphasis on full contextual analysis of fewer events or conditions and their interrelations.

1.5.2. Data Collection Method

A questionnaire of 34 items survey (designed by University of Delaware) has been adapted with necessary amendments relevant to the subject along with semi-structured interviews have been utilized as data collection tools. Responses from participants were sought along a Four-point Likert's scale (i.e. Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Disagreed, and Strongly Disagreed). Data have been collected from (30) Thirty UBL branches through Stratified Random Sampling method. 150 employees were targeted out of which 100 responded.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Organizational Support Theory

According to organizational support theory, the development of organizational support is encouraged by employees' tendency to assign the organization humanlike characteristics (Eisenberger et al., 1986). It is often perceived that organizational actions are considered as indications of the organization's goal rather attributed to the agents' individual motives. This action demonstrated by organizational norms, culture and policies, provide the stipulated behaviors and the way power is exercised by an organization's agents over individual employees.

2.2 Antecedents of Perceived Organizational Support

On the basis of organizational support theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986), four general forms of perceived favorable treatment received from the organization (i.e. Supervisor Support, Fairness, Organizational Rewards and Job conditions) should increase employees' performance.

i) Fairness

It is used to determine the distribution of resources among employees (Greenberg, 1990). Shore and Shore (1995) suggested that consistency in fair decisions about the resource distribution has a strong cumulative effect on organizational support by showing concern for employees' welfare. Cropanzano & Greenberg (1997) defines structural justice as formal rules and policies regarding the decisions that directly or indirectly affect employees, including adequate notice in advance before decisions are implemented and participative decision process.

ii) Supervisor Support

Generally supervisors are considered as agents of the organization since they have the core responsibility to achieve organizational goals. Therefore, they are also responsible to direct and evaluate the performance of their subordinates. This is one of the reasons that employees generally view their supervisor's favorable or unfavorable treatment toward them as indicative of the organization's support.

iii) Organizational Rewards

Shore and Shore (1995) suggested that human resources practices showing recognition of employee's contributions should be positively related to organizational support. Many types of rewards and recognition have been studied in relation to explain their relation with organizational support (e.g. pay, promotions, recognition, job security, autonomy, role stressors, and training). Discretionary rewards serve as a positive valuation of the contribution from employees' and thus contribute to organizational support.

2.3 Consequences of Organizational Support

i) Organizational Commitment

On the basis of reciprocity norm, organizational support should create a felt obligation to care about the organization's welfare (Eisenberger et al., 2001). The obligation to exchange caring (Foa & Foa, 1980) should enhance employees' affective commitment to the personified organization. It also increases by fulfilling employees' socio-emotional needs as their affiliation with the firm and emotional support (Armeli et al., 1998).

ii) Job Satisfaction

Organizational support influences employees’ general reactions to their job, including job satisfaction and their positive mood at workplace. Job satisfaction refers to employees’ overall affect laden attitude toward their job (Witt, 1991). Organizational support contributes to the job satisfaction of the employees by meeting their socio-emotional needs, increasing expectancies of performance-reward, and demonstrating the availability of extra aid when needed. Positive mood differs conceptually from job satisfaction in that it involves a general emotional state without a specific object (George, 1989).

iii) Increased Performance

Organizational support should increase job performance and actions favorable to the organization beyond assigned responsibilities. According to George and Brief (1992), such extra role activities include helping peers, safeguarding organization interest, participation and gaining knowledge and skills that are beneficial to the organization.

v) Desire to Stay With the Organization

Witt (1991) examined the relationship between organizational support and employees’ desire to remain with the organization. He used a scale for assessing employee’s tendency to leave the organization if offered higher pay, more professional freedom or status, or friendlier working environment.

3. Analysis of Empirical Studies and Data

**Matrix 4.1
Questionnaire Matrix**

Following questionnaire matrix shows the response in percentage received from the respondents against each question in the survey of this study.

S. #	Variable	Question	Response Against Rating Scale in %			
			1	2	3	4
1	Withdrawal Behavior	Question # 1	60	10	18	12
		Question # 2	5	15	35	45
		Question # 3	65	13	10	2
2	Organizational Support	Question # 4	9	36	42	12
		Question # 5	13	39	45	3
		Question # 6	19	30	45	6
3	Procedural Justice	Question # 7	0	8	39	53
		Question # 8	30	48	19	3
		Question # 9	0	9	40	51
4	Distributive Justice	Question # 10	2	7	33	58
		Question # 11	12	28	33	27
5	Supervisor Support	Question # 12	45	33	8	14

		Question # 13	48	35	12	5
		Question # 14	5	25	38	32
6	Recognition	Question # 15	30	42	12	16
		Question # 16	8	12	55	25
		Question # 17	4	8	51	37
7	Reward	Question # 18	0	2	58	40
		Question # 19	7	23	45	25
		Question # 20	10	34	32	24
8	Job Condition	Question # 21	29	36	12	23
		Question # 22	28	24	33	15
		Question # 23	40	42	10	8
9	Commitment	Question # 24	10	11	36	43
		Question # 25	9	12	51	28
10	Job involvement	Question # 26	12	19	30	39
11	Performance	Question # 27	34	55	7	4
		Question # 28	7	15	38	40
12	Reduces Strain	Question # 29	3	55	30	12
		Question # 30	8	35	30	27
		Question # 31	0	10	60	30
13	Desire to Remain	Question # 32	68	20	10	2
		Question # 33	3	17	58	22
		Question # 34	22	34	36	8

Matrix 4.2

Interview Matrix

The interviews were planned as semi-structured and questions were just used as initiators. Some Interview questions and their department wise responses are compiled in the following matrix.

S.#	Questions/Statements	Interviews Response			
		H.R	D.C.S.M	B.M	C.S.M
1	Employees are rewarded for their punctuality and attendance.	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
2	Is there a fair system of distribution of reward in your organization?	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3	Usually supervisor also serves as mentor and coach for subordinates to perform their job effectively.	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree

4	Do you think that recognition can bring positive change in despondent and de-motivated employees?	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree
5	Do you think that your organization rewards employees' adequately to show their concern for their well being?	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
6	Do you think that improving job condition and work environment can bring positive impact on employees' performance?	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
7	Do you think that employees are committed in exchange of organizational support towards them for their well being?	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree
8	Has UBL been successful in providing opportunities for individual to take initiatives and judgment in their tasks?	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree
9	Do you think that increasing organizational support can increase employees' performance?	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Agree
10	Does your organization pay attention to reduce on-job emotional and psychological stress?	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11	Generally employees desire to remain in the organization due to its welfare and credibility.	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

Policy Matrix 4.3

Seven different policies have been selected among the provided secondary data by the management of the UBL and the following matrix represents a snapshot of the extent of which UBL policies comprise organizational support.

S.#	Policies	Fairness	Supervisor Support	Job Condition	Reward
1	Leave Policy	X	√	X	√
2	Performance Measurement & Evaluation Policy	√	X	X	√
3	Medical & Insurance Policy	√	√	N/A	N/A
4	Job Rotation & Transfer Policy	√	X	X	N/A
5	Training & Development Policy	√	√	X	√
6	Staff Loan Policy	√	√	N/A	N/A
7	Compliance Policy	√	√	√	√

4. Critical Debate & Analysis

To what extent does UBL Policies and Practices Comprise Organizational Support for Employees?

UBL (United Bank Limited) policies matrix shows that leave policies are not fair for the employees with respect of their hiring, since leave encashment is restricted to only those employees who were employed before 1996. Leave encashment privilege should equally be given to other staff as well. In response to the question related to the participation of stake holders in business decision, 53% respondents found strongly dissatisfied in survey. This shows that management in practice usually takes decision in isolation and does not appreciate participative decision making. However, 48% respondent agreed in the survey that organization does disseminate information down the hierarchy. This high response received due to the proper existence and functioning of a separate department i.e. Corporate Communication Department which is responsible to release notices, circulars etc. In response to the question regarding safe guarding employees from adverse consequences of any business decision by the organization, 51% respondents were found strongly disagreed. This mainly happened due to the recent down sizing/lay off programs initiated by the organization that has affected so many senior employees in the organization. Interviews conducted with District Customer Service Manager, Branch Manager and Customer Service Manager in Interview matrix (table 4.1) respondents disagreed that employees are committed with the firm due to the organizational support. Excluding Human Resource department, other departments have very clear stand presented in their interviews that employees do not desire to remain in the firm due to organizational welfare and credibility.

Policy matrix 4.3 shows that performance measurement and evaluation has fairness but as per interviews response from Customer Service Manager and Branch Manager's. UBL needs to extend performance evaluation on relative measurement basis and should scientifically involve customers in the feedback. It is also felt that this policy lacks in implementation due to political, union, interest groups and other referenced sources. In response to the question regarding the fair distribution of reward considering the responsibilities, 58% respondents were found disagreed in the survey. This reflects that UBL (United Bank Limited) doesn't have a transparent system for the distribution of reward.

Is Organizational Support Supposed to Contribute in Mediating with Work Performance in UBL?

Interviews with Human Resource Department, Branch Managers & Customer Service Managers show agreement that by increasing organizational support can bring positive change in employee's performance. Questionnaire data shows strong disagreement i.e. 40% respondents did not take their responsibilities as a challenge and did not strive to perform above the management's excitations. It is also evident from the data extracted from survey that 55% respondents agreed that organization provides sufficient opportunities of training and development to enhance employees' competencies.

It is unanimously agreed by all the respondents in the interviews conducted in this study about supervisor's role as mentor and coach can yield better work performance in the employees' and organization is needed to get more focus in establishing effective role of supervisors and to work out over team work. It is stated in the

interview conducted with District Customer Service Manager, Branch Manager & Customer Service Manager that UBL is needed to pay more attention on emotional and psychological stress which employees face in their jobs. In response to the question regarding recognition system for employees, who provide good services to the customers, 51% respondent were found dissatisfied. This illustrates that organization needs to initiate and establish "*Employee of the month program*" for their recognition and appreciation. Such program will increase their self-esteem and make them prime among others.

Human Resource Manager, District Customer Service Manager, Branch Manager & Customer Service Manager very clearly conveyed in their interviews that by improving job conditions and work environment they can bring positive impact on employees' performance. This shows that employees' have the tendency to perform better. This finding is, however supported by the data extracted from the questionnaire i.e. when asked the respondents whether they are treated with respect and dignity, 33% respondents were found disagreed.

5. Conclusion

Following conclusions are made from the analysis of the data collected in this research study conducted in UBL.

- Research findings show that UBL policies are needed to be reviewed in the light of organizational support and employees' welfare. However, in practices UBL policies desperately lack organizational support for employees and show that they do not comprise of employees' welfare and their wellbeing.
- A very strong constructive belief is found in this research regarding the tendency of organizational support, if included in UBL policies with its implementation in its essence, could mediate with work performance. It can also play as a key contributing factor in achieving organization's goals and objectives.

6. Recommendations

Following recommendations are suggested based on the findings and results of this study.

1. UBL could demonstrate its support to employees through such programs that indicate that the organization values their contributions, such as a well established performance based reward system. By ensuring a concrete connection between performance and rewards, clear explanations of the managerial control system and giving more autonomy to employees to control and influence in the system will increase levels of their performance.
2. Supervisor should take initiatives to reduce the conflict and psychological stress of work and family responsibilities. Managers who want employees to improve their performance or to increase either interpersonal facilitation or job dedication should look for ways to facilitate high levels of job satisfaction.

3. UBL should initiate employee's recognition programs such as employee of the month; and should distribute souvenirs etc. for their encouragement. This will create a sense of achievement in them which ultimately results in more dedication and motivation in their job.

4. It was observed during the study that proper work load analysis should be done in UBL and in its accordance; appropriate work load distribution is needed to prevent those employees' working under great emotional and psychological stress. Such working conditions are creating burn out situation for them and cause a gradual decline in their performance.

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