

The Mediating Role of Self-Efficacy on the Relationship Between Organizational Support and Job Performance Among Early-Career Employees in the Private Education Sector

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to examine the relationship between organizational support and job performance with the indirect role of self-efficacy among employees in the private education sector in Pakistan in their early careers. Based on the social cognitive theory, the study hypothesizes that the perceived organizational support has a positive impact on self-efficacy, which subsequently increases job performance. Two hundred (200) early-career employees (less than three years of experience) of the private educational institutions in Lahore who work in early career were surveyed. The standardized questionnaires were used in data collection and SPSS and Hayes (Model 4) PROCESS Macro were used in analysis. The findings demonstrate that the mediation role of self-efficacy in organizational support and job performance is significant. These results highlight the need to create a positive work atmosphere and build the self-confidence of the employees so as to enable them to perform better.

Key Words

Organizational Support, Self-Efficacy, Job Performance, Mediation, Education Sector, Early-Career Employees

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Introduction

The business world of the twenty-first century is dynamic and fast moving, and organizations need to be swift and responsive to the constant changes. Quick change in technology, unpredictable political situations, and unpredictable economic situation in the world require organizations to be flexible in terms of local and international market conditions (Haysindex.com, 2020). The success of this agility greatly depends on the determination and willingness of the employees to overcome such complexities (McKenna, 2021). Organizational fraternity between flexible employee and conducive management systems helps the organizations to adapt to these changing needs. It therefore follows that organizations have to continuously review and improve their internal operations to keep

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up with the competition. The key aspect here is that the job roles should be created according to the current industry standards, and they should be provided with the latest technological requirements and appropriate skills (Hernaus et al., 2021; Oldham and Fried, 2016).

The effect of being poorly designed job designs, increased job demands and lack of support mechanisms can undermine employee input in the achievement of organizational objectives. These issues are especially strong with employees in their early careers who tend to witness uncertainty and absence of direction at their workplaces. The newly hired graduates, who have little work experiences, are supposed to work individually and prove to be skilled in job operations. Nevertheless, the common fear among employers is that most of these graduates lack the experience in performing the job requirements, which is usually because of the lack of alignment between theoretical training and employment needs (Cheong et al., 2016a; Mottain, 2019; Ruzaimi et al., 2019; Vincent, 2020). Such employees are regularly disoriented in their roles and unprepared to face the real-life situations (Cheong et al., 2016b; Magnano et al., 2021; Tahir et al., 2020). Additionally, employers are not satisfied with the lack of employability skills (problem-solving, communication, and self-confidence) (D'Silva, 2020; Nadarajah, 2021; Tanius et al., 2020). This weakness is expressed in the form of collaboration challenges, poor involvement, and motivation among the new employees (Heang et al., 2019).

The resultant disconnects between the new and the experienced workers cause a performance gap and friction within the organization. In the case of poor understanding of job responsibilities, the early-career employees find it difficult to perform to expectations. Therefore, organizational support plays the most critical role in empowering these people to adjust and succeed. Proper human resource policies and practices may lead to positive working environments where employees can develop (Lan & Chen, 2020; Malik & Nawaz, 2021). Development of well-articulated, capability matching job designs can facilitate the seamless flow of work processes and execution of tasks, hence enhancing the general productivity. Job design is properly planned with particular competencies included, which can help to complete everyday assignments efficiently (Broeck & Parker, 2017; Oldham and Fried, 2016).

In addition to this, in this job design model, organizations need to incorporate developmental support like mentoring. Mentors are able to explain job expectations, match roles with career objectives and introduce contextual information which can result in collaborative effort and higher performance. Their participation is seen to allow role understanding and effectively new employees to perform at the expected standards in the organization (Anafarta & Apaydin, 2016; Gyansah & Guantan, 2018). Human resource strategy based on mentoring equips professionals in the beginning of their career with professional knowledge, guidance, and career planning (Kram, 1983; Abdullah, 2021). This support system strategy promotes career visioning and organizational commitment and employee development goals.

In order to succeed in the early-career workers, it is notable that the workers should have the qualities like adaptability, collaboration, self-confidence and initiative. They must be sensitive to change in work dynamics and technological disruptions (Low et al., 2021; National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2021; Quacquarelli Symonds Limited, 2019). One of the most important constructs that make individuals remain calm and functional during the time of pressure is self-efficacy, thereby enabling individuals to be highly flexible. The fact that self-efficacy is a leading psychological resource prepares one to deal with problems of vague roles and role-changing demands, which enhance job performance. The psychological preparation and the organizational support system plays a very important role in making sure that employees are in harmony with their workplace (Savickas, 2013; Klehe et al., 2011; Zacher, 2016).

In this backdrop, this paper explores the role of organizational support in promoting job performance by the mediating role of self-efficacy among employees who work in the private education sector in their early careers.

The research adds to the knowledge of the organizational behavior since it demonstrates the combinative effect of psychological and environmental factors on the results of performance.

Literature Review

Role of Organizational Support

Organizational support is an important factor that increases the motivation of employees, job satisfaction, and performance. Amid the fast-paced evolving dynamism of technology and market dynamics, support systems are part of the solutions that could be availed to employees, particularly to those in the early stages of their career as they seek to adjust to such change. Perceived organizational support (POS) is a term that is used to describe how employees believe their organization cares and appreciates their efforts and is concerned about their welfare (Eisenberger et al., 1986). When an organization has a positive working environment, employees get increased job satisfaction, engage more, and have less turnover intention (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Many forms of organizational support are possible such as sufficient training, resources, feedback, and emotional motivation. These resources make employees develop confidence and resilience which allow them to work despite the challenges.

In the case of young employees, organizational support is quite essential because they have been in the academic setting and are now entering the workforce where they are facing new challenges where new tasks and expectations are expected. Organizational support is seen to give these employees the desired guidance, tools, and feedback to excel in their roles and hence influence the job performance positively. Studies indicate that when employees feel that the organizational support is high, they tend to have better levels of job satisfaction and improved levels of mental quality and better performance results (Luthans et al., 2007). Such a sense of support enhances the employees loyalty to the organization and their jobs, which facilitates success in the long-term and professional advancements.

Role of Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is a belief of a person that he or she can perform certain tasks successfully. It has been known since long that high self-efficacy has been linked to higher motivation, persistence and general performance of work (Bandura, 1997). In the case of graduates who have just started their jobs, self-efficacy plays a significant role in the job performance especially in the initial phases of their employment, as they are likely to encounter new problems and steep learning curves. High self-efficacy employees are also more willing to undertake difficult tasks, stick to their focus and persist with the losses which all lead to better job performance (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998).

The organizational support plays an important role in influencing the self-efficacy of an employee. Whenever employees get positive feedback and training coupled with emotional support by the organization, it makes them believe in their abilities which in turn causes them to perform better in their duties (Luthans et al., 2007). Also, self-efficacy does not only refer to the capability to accomplish tasks but also the assurance to face new and unforeseen situations. Employees who are in the early career stages especially find the environment conducive to developing self-efficacy, which allows them to adjust to the new job roles without being hampered by challenges, which might occur at the workplace. Thus, self-efficacy is a psychological resource improving the abilities of the employees to work successfully and take care of their professional development.

Job Performance

Job performance can be defined as the behavior and acts, which lead to organizational goals achievement. It involves task performance (e.g. doing certain job tasks) and contextual performance (e.g. organizational citizenship such as collaboration and initiative) (Campbell, 1990). A major result of organizational support and self-efficacy is

job performance. Employees who have access to pertinent resources and emotional support together with high self-efficacy will show exemplary job performance. Specifically, the employees who are still in their early years of work experience need organizational support, as well as self-confidence to be successful.

There are several reasons that are related to job performance, such as the work environment, job design and personal capabilities. Organizational support is critical in facilitating the resources and feedback necessary to enable the employees to perform successfully and self-efficacy serves to guide the employees on how to tackle their tasks level of effort and the challenges to overcome. It has been demonstrated that organizational support is positively related to job performance since workers are more motivated and productive when they feel that they are supported by an organization (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). On the same note, self-efficacy has been discovered to have a direct impact on job performance since highly self-believing employees tend to undertake intricate work and deliver on a higher level (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998).

The job performance, in the case of newly employed graduates, is usually determined by the support offered by the organization and confidence in the abilities. The professionals at an early career can experience role ambiguity, lack of clear expectations, but organizational support, including mentoring, can present the required background of successful job performance. When the employees are confident that their skills are able and that they have the backing of their organization, their job performance is better therefore resulting in increased satisfaction and career growth (Luthans et al., 2007).

Hypotheses

H1: Organizational support is positively related to job performance.

H2: Self-efficacy is positively related to job performance.

H3: Self-efficacy mediates the relationship between organizational support and job performance.

This review of literatures has shown the importance of organizational support and self-efficacy in determining the outcome of job performance especially when it comes to newly hired graduates who are acclimatizing to the work environment. The combination of these variables has given an exhaustive insight on how organizations can assist early-career employees in performing well at their job.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework has been created to investigate mediating role of self-efficacy in the relationship between organizational support and job performance. The model hypothesizes that, self-efficacy is increased by organization support which positively influences job performance. Through the mediator, self-efficacy, the employees will acquire the confidence and resilience necessary to perform their role well, hence resulting in better job performance. Another important point made by this model is the way organisations can enable the success of the employees through proper support structures and instilling self-belief in them directly affecting their performance.

Figure 1

The Framework of a Study Showing the Independent Variable (Organizational Support), the Mediator (Self-Efficacy), and the Dependent Variable (Job Performance).



Methodology

Participants and Design

The target population of the present study is the employed graduates of the Pakistani public education institutions. The participants were provided with an online self-administered questionnaire that was dispatched via the Alumni office at the universities specializing in teacher education and training courses. The research focused on educators in early-career (less than three years of experience) and in the transition between academic training and full-time teaching.

Purposive sampling was used to select 200 employed graduates whereby respondents were the relevant population types in discussing the study topic, which is the education sector of the general population. The sample subjects were picked among Pakistan public schools in urban and rural regions. This method will give a wider perspective on how organizational support, self-efficacy, and job performance are realized by newly hired educators in the state sector.

The subjects were selected because of their recent graduation (less than three years old) and are the most probable to have issues with role transition, professional growth, and an adjustment to the teaching environment. Taking into account the role of career adaptability in the education sector, the research presupposes that these educators can experience different degrees of support and self-efficacy, and it directly influences their job performance.

Study Instruments

The survey includes filtering questions to distinguish between employed and unemployed graduates before proceeding to the relevant sections. The survey measures the three key variables, organizational support, self-efficacy, and job performance using established scales. The following scales were adapted for this study, with Likert-type items ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Table 1

Instrument Adoption Detail

Variable	Items	Reliability	Source
Organizational Support	My school values my contributions to the institution. My school provides adequate resources to support my teaching." I feel my school cares about my professional growth. My school recognizes my hard work and achievements.	0.89	Eisenberger et al. (1986)
Self-Efficacy	I am confident that I can handle unexpected situations in my classroom. I can manage to solve teaching-related problems if I try hard enough. When facing teaching challenges, I believe I can find effective solutions. I am capable of achieving the goals I set for my teaching career.	0.87	Schwarzer & Jerusalem (1995)
Job Performance	I complete all my teaching tasks on time. I take initiative in improving my teaching methods without being asked. I consistently meet the performance expectations set by my school. I collaborate with my colleagues to improve the educational environment.	0.91	Williams & Anderson (1991)

By focusing on early-career educators in public educational institutions, this study aims to explore the relationships between organizational support, self-efficacy, and job performance in the public education sector in Pakistan. The chosen participants are at a critical stage in their careers, where organizational support and self-confidence are essential for adapting to the demands of teaching and excelling in their roles.

Statistical Analysis

The data obtained for this research were analyzed with the help of IBM SPSS program version 28.0. The first analysis was the descriptive analysis that was aimed at evaluating the demographic factors of the respondents. In order to test the relationships between the variables, multiple linear regression analyses were conducted, in which, the standardized regression coefficients and beta values of the independent variables were utilized to test their possible effect on the dependent variable, job performance.

The mediation role of self-efficacy in the relationship between organizational support and job performance was analyzed using PROCESS procedure Version 4.1 by Hayes (2022). The analysis employed 5000 bootstrap samples to calculate the indirect effects and their 95% confidence intervals. All significance tests were conducted using a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. The mediation model used was Model 4 (parallel mediation), which tests both the total and indirect effects of the independent variables (organizational support) on the dependent variable (job performance) via the mediator (self-efficacy).

Results

Initially respondents' demographics were assessed, which is necessary step for the initial understanding and generalizability of the findings. Table 2 Provides detailed overview of respondents.

Table 2

Demographic Analysis

Demographics	Data	Number (n)	Percentage
Sample Size	Total respondents	200	100%
Age (Years)	21-28	200	100%
Gender	Female	120	60%
	Male	80	40%
Academic Discipline	Social sciences, business, and law	104	52%
	Sciences, mathematics, and computing	56	28%
	Education, teaching, and training	40	20%
Employment Status	Permanent staff	156	78%
	Contract basis	30	15%
	Temporary	14	7%
Monthly Income	20K-60K	200	100%
Job Position	Entry-level teaching roles	60	30%
	Junior executive level	50	25%
	Mid-level teaching (senior executive or coordinator)	90	45%
Education-Job Alignment	Aligned	130	65%
	Not aligned	70	35%

Further, data analysis was conducted using multiple regression analysis to examine the contributions of organizational support and self-efficacy to job performance among newly employed graduates.

Table 3

Multiple Linear Regression for Organizational Support on Job Performance

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients, B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients, Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	1.025	0.078		13.14	<0.001
Organizational Support	0.505	0.032	0.710	15.81	<0.001

Note: $p < 0.001$, β = standardized regression coefficient, $R = 0.710$, $R^2 = 0.504$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.500$

The results indicate that organizational support is a significant predictor of job performance ($\beta = 0.710$, $t = 15.81$, $p < 0.001$). This implies that increased organizational support leads to higher job performance among newly employed graduates.

Table 4

Multiple Linear Regression for Organizational Support on Self-Efficacy

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients, B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients, Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	1.232	0.065		18.92	<0.001
Organizational Support	0.493	0.027	0.654	18.19	<0.001

Note: $p < 0.001$, β = standardized regression coefficient, $R = 0.654$, $R^2 = 0.428$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.423$

Table 4 shows that organizational support is also a significant predictor of self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.654$, $t = 18.19$, $p < 0.001$). Higher levels of organizational support enhance self-efficacy, which in turn influences job performance.

Table 5

Mediation Analysis for Self-Efficacy in the Relationship Between Organizational Support and Job Performance

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients, B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients, Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	0.843	0.075		11.24	<0.001
Organizational Support	0.405	0.027	0.598	14.81	<0.001
Self-Efficacy	0.368	0.029	0.513	12.69	<0.001

Note: $p < 0.001$, β = standardized regression coefficient, $R = 0.698$, $R^2 = 0.488$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.483$

The mediation analysis confirmed that self-efficacy significantly mediates the relationship between organizational support and job performance. The indirect effect was statistically significant, indicating that organizational support influences job performance through its effect on self-efficacy.

Findings and Suggestions

The findings of this study are in line with the previous studies that reveal that organizational support is crucial in enabling newly hired graduates to be successful in their employment. The results demonstrate that organizational support has a positive effect on self-efficacy in case of high organizational support which subsequently can enhance job performance as well. This is consistent with the idea that organizational support enables employees to feel confidence and flexibility by providing resources, feedback, and emotional support to them, which later can make them successful in their work (Martin, 2022; Whitehead et al., 2022).

The link between the organizational support and self-efficacy contributes to the skills of new employed graduates to work with their roles more efficiently. A mediator such as self-efficacy enables people to believe that they have the ability to cope with job-related challenges, and consequently, they enhance their job performance (Arora, 2020). This proves the fact that the dedication of an organization to ensure the supportive practices can enhance the confidence of an employee and contribute to his/her success in the challenging working conditions (Jiang et al., 2020; Lapointe & Vandenbergh, 2017).

Despite the clear relationship between organizational support and job performance through self-efficacy, further emphasis should be placed on ensuring that self-efficacy development is supported throughout the early stages of employment. Organizations, especially through human resource management policies, should actively foster an environment that builds self-efficacy among newly employed graduates. By doing so, these graduates are better prepared to handle both predictable and unpredictable working conditions. The creation of a supportive environment, coupled with high self-efficacy, helps new employees adapt to job demands and ensures high levels of job performance. Organizational support for self-efficacy thus creates a more engaged and effective workforce.

It can be stated that although organizational support positively affects self-efficacy and job performance, the use of the self-efficacy as a mediator is still not fully exploited in the organizational practices of most fields. This implies that self-efficacy as one of the main drivers of performance improvement is not fully utilized in organizations, and the task of self-efficacy in adapting to organizational needs is usually left to individual action (Lasi et al., 2020; Malek & Bakar, 2020). Companies need to come up with systematic programs and policies that incorporate the use of self-efficacy-building in the development process of employees so that they are able to cope with the requirements of their job and flourish.

Therefore, the evolution of self-efficacy should be studied further in the future, particularly with regard to career adaptability at the beginning of employment. Research on training programs and career development interventions that emphasize self-efficacy can give us a clue on the way organizations can contribute more to the long-term effectiveness of their employees. As an example, past studies have considered the role of personality training in career exploration and planning (Green et al., 2020), and in a similar way, career adaptability would be assisted with a specific intervention that focuses on improving self-efficacy. Further, the research could be conducted in the future to determine the development of self-efficacy based on different human resource practices like promotions, career advancement, and coaching. Such practices may assist in enhancing the organizational commitment and employee satisfaction as well as lead to improved job performance and overall organizational success (Wesarat, 2014).

It is also possible that future researchers could also test the importance of organization leadership in supporting career flexibility. The adaptability of the careers of employees can be improved by incorporating leadership techniques that are employee-focused and are geared towards developing the employees, especially when the workforce is composed of fresh hires. With the world of work more and more becoming self-managed career-wise, the new graduates of the workforce would need organized career management guidance in their respective organization to succeed. Their self-efficacy can be further facilitated by incorporation of the element of job autonomy and the scope of their decisions into their job position so that they can make the right decisions about their career.

Implications of the Study

This study provides evidence that organizational support significantly influences job performance through self-efficacy among newly employed graduates. The findings make several key contributions to the literature on career adaptability and the self-efficacy construct. Adaptability arises not only from an individual's personal competencies

but also from the support provided by the organizational environment (Haenggli & Hirschi, 2020; Ocampo et al., 2020; Rudolph et al., 2019). This study's results contribute to the understanding of how self-efficacy mediates the relationship between organizational support and job performance.

From managerial perspective, the results of study will help in the design of the effective job structure, which encompasses organizational support and self-efficacy. The policies utilized by the human resource management must be specific that the employees are aware of their career ladder and that adequate support is offered to make them achieve. The level of organizational dedication in terms of assimilating new employees increases the chances of doing better in their work, and, consequently, at work.

Conclusion

This study has clearly illustrated the role of the organizational support in developing self-efficacy and job performance. The value of self-efficacy can help the newly hired graduates adjust better to the education to work transition by making them more expectant and competent in their job roles. In addition, organizations ought to understand the importance of offering a climate that fosters self-efficacy as a strategy of developing employees. Graduates in their new jobs can cope with the demands of their new jobs through effective organizational support and self-efficacy evolution, which can eventually lead to their better career achievement. The dedication towards the supportive working environment and empowerment of employees will lead to the success of the organization and the establishment of a more active and productive workforce.

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