

**Impact of Perceived Organisational Support on Psychological
Well-being of the Employees, Keeping Emotional Intelligence as
the Moderating Variable - The Case of UK Firms**

Research Proposal

Strategic Management

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Research Title

To determine impacts of perceived organisational support on the psychological wellbeing employees keeping emotional intelligence as the moderating variable - the case of UK firms

Introduction

Contextual Background

In this competitive business environment, organisations have been in order to increase the overall efficiency and productivity of the company with the implementation of various strategies and frameworks. The study of Khan and Salahuddin (2018) identified strategies that are being employed in an organisation that increase the efficiency, performance and productivity of the employees. It has been identified that employee happiness, anxiety levels, stress levels, mental wellness, emotional state and social relations are considered as the best measures to analyse the psychological wellbeing of employees. However, in the same context, another study studies that amongst all these factors, organisational support and emotional intelligence in the organisation are considered as the fundamental factor that can affect the well-being of the organisation as well as the well-being of its employees (Nielsen et al., 2017).

The psychological well-being of employees has been considered as the best option to increase the overall effectiveness of employees and the organisation. The mental, emotional and physical well-being of employees is considered as the best way to increase the overall commitment of employees and increase organisational performance (Danna and Griffin, 1999). However, it has been argued if the company fails to support their employees and employees feel frustrated at their organisations, then it is impossible to increase their work

commitment and to satisfy them with their job (McGuire and McLaren, 2009). Therefore, it can be said that the performance of the organisation is depending upon the mental, physical and emotional well-being of employees.

Various debates have been made to date that emphasise whether the employee psychological wellbeing, satisfaction and performance is dependent on the organisational support and emotional intelligence being provided to them at their jobs. This is because of the fact that the stress, happiness and mental stability levels for each employee are different and this also varies with the job characteristics and the support that is being provided in an organisation.

The study of Eisenberger and Stinglhamber (2011) has studied the wellbeing of employees is related to the emotional intelligence and the organisational support being provided to the employees. From the study, inconclusive results were obtained that showed that it is impossible to understand employee wellbeing and satisfaction with their jobs until and unless proper organisational support is delivered to them (Van De Voorde, Paauwe and Van Veldhoven, 2012). However, increased mental and physical health of employees has become the major concern of the organisations as employees are being considered as the major asset that can help in increasing the overall effectiveness and performance of the organisation.

Research Gap

A number of studies have studied employee wellbeing and it has been identified that the wellbeing of employees can be related to a number of factors that are related to their family, friends and their job places as well (Wright and Cropanzano, 2004). Another study by Van De Voorde, Paauwe and Van Veldhoven (2012) was studied that reveals that the well-

being of employees may get lower if the organisations fail to provide support to their employees or understand their emotions, or there is a mismatch between the demands of the employees with their capabilities.

The gap between the objectivity of perceived organisational support and the subjective feelings of employees needs to be catered which results in mental instability, negative psychological states and poor mental health of employees. Moreover, no study has been carried out that focus on identifying the impacts of emotional intelligence on both, the perceived organisational support and the psychological wellbeing of employees. The study of Bakker (2015) studied various aspects of what needs to be done in order to maintain the psychological wellbeing of employees. However, the study only focuses on the physical stability and health of the employees to become a major factor that helps in increasing the overall performance of the organisation (Ogbonnaya et al., 2017).

Therefore, it can be said that the academic literature lacks in empirical findings regarding the investigation of how perceived organisational support can affect the overall wellbeing of employees. The study of Caesens, Stinglhamber and Ohana (2016) has mainly focused on the variables such as job characteristics, autonomy at the workplace, workload, role conflicts, intrinsic and extrinsic rewards in the context of the psychological wellbeing of employees. This study revealed inconclusive results, hence this gives a need to conduct the research and explore how perceived organisational support can affect the employee's psychological wellbeing in the context of emotional intelligence at the organisation.

Objectives and Research Questions

Pertaining to the above-mentioned information, the following is the main research question that has been developed to conduct the study:

How does perceived organisational support in an organisation can affect the psychological wellbeing of employees through emotional intelligence?

This study is aimed to explore the impacts of perceived organisational support on the wellbeing of employees in the case of UK firms. Following objectives are established to meet this aim:

- To understand what is perceived organisational support and what psychological well-being of employees is
- To investigate major factors of perceived organisational support that contribute in increasing the psychological well-being of employees
- To identify the impact of perceived organisational support on the psychological wellbeing of employees using emotional intelligence as the moderating variable
- To propose effective recommendations to UK firms in order to increase their psychological wellbeing with the help of providing organisational support and emotional understanding

Research Contribution

This study is aimed to fill the research gap identified and to focus on the psychological wellbeing of employees influenced by the organisational support and emotional intelligence in an organisation. This study employs the findings from various studies that have been conducted in the same notion while identifying the inconclusive results to lay the main focus of the research. Past studies have focused on the mental and physical

wellbeing of the employees while this study is aimed to contribute by exploring the wellbeing of employees in terms of physical, mental, emotional/psychological aspects (Dall'Ora et al., 2016).

Moreover, fewer studies have studied these aspects of employee psychological wellbeing and is expected that the findings from this study will help identify the best strategies that could be used in organisations to increase the psychological wellbeing of the employees. the findings from this study can be implemented in UK firms to develop supporting organisations and to increase their psychological wellbeing at the same time. Moreover, several factors of perceived organisational support will also be identified in the study that will help establish the best strategies to be implemented in the organisation to increase the wellbeing and understanding emotions of employees.

Literature Review

Perceived Organisational Support and Psychological Wellbeing of Employees

Perceived organisational support is defined as the general beliefs of employees that the organisation has been fulfilling the needs and demands of its employees and values for their contribution to the organisation (Aselage and Eisenberger, 2003). In general, the psychological well-being of employees is part of the contentment feelings of employees when they are provided with satisfactory treatment in the organisation. Thompson and Prottas (2006) identified that the perceived organisational support for employees is related to the perception of employees related to the surrounding environment and the organisational culture that make them satisfied or dissatisfied in the organisation. However, satisfaction or dissatisfaction can be related to the nature of the treatment in the organisation. Therefore, it can be said that perceived organisational support helps in evaluating the psychological well-being of employees (Kurtessis et al., 2017).

The well-being of employees is defined by Guest (2017) as the feeling of contentment and satisfaction of employees while meeting their demands and desires. It has been identified that employee wellbeing has been considered as the best way to evaluate productivity and performance in an organisation. However, various contexts of well-being can be explained related to the wellbeing of employees in an organisation that can be distinguished as job-related and context-free wellbeing (Ogbonnaya et al., 2017). The study of Dall'Ora et al. (2016) has identified that the well-being of employees can be related to the mental, physical and emotional wellbeing of employees. It has further been studied that when employees are physically, mentally and emotionally stable with their jobs, then they are likely to be satisfied and help in maintaining their performances in the organisation.

Emotional Intelligence

According to Joseph and Newman (2010), emotional intelligence is defined as the way or capability of an individual to recognise their own emotions and feelings of themselves or of others. Emotional intelligence is majorly concerned with different types of psychologies where the emotions and feelings of the people can be managed on the basis of emotional awareness, the capability of harnessing emotions and the application of those emotions in different tasks (Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee, 2013). In an organisational context, the emotional and psychological wellbeing of employees is interrelated with the ability of employees, managers and other organisational members that deal with each other on regular basis. It has been argued that emotional intelligence is majorly related to the people in an organisation that are capable of understanding the feelings and emotions of others and helping them in their growth and personality development (O'Boyle Jr et al., 2011). Effective leaders and organisational support are the key drivers that can help employees and other staff members to feel content in the organisation and result in a healthy lifestyle and effective work-life balance.

Factors of Perceived Organisational Support

The factors of perceived organisational support can be divided into job characteristics, autonomy at the workplace, workload, role conflicts, intrinsic and extrinsic rewards.

It has been argued by Caesens, Stinglhamber and Ohana (2016) that the perceived organisational support is majorly influenced by the job characteristics of an employee and the managerial actions perceived by the individual working in the organisation. These job characteristics can be related to the nature of the job and the variety of tasks being provided to employees. On the other hand, autonomy at the workplace is also sometimes characterised as the major element of job characteristics while other authors distinguish it and place it

under the organisational culture (Thompson and Prottas, 2006). If employees are being provided with an effective organisation where managers are supportive and provide leverage to employees in the decision-making process, then it has been found out that employees feel contented in their job roles and results in better performance.

The workload is considered as the other factor of perceived organisational support while excessive workload results in stress and anxiety; affecting the overall performance and wellbeing of employees (Aselage and Eisenberger, 2003). Tight deadlines and on-call duty scenarios have been affecting the mental and emotional stability of employees in an organisation, thus it can be a part of the perceived organisational support. Moreover, role conflicts also affect the wellbeing and mental stability of employees and it can be considered as a major factor of perceived organisational support that can affect the wellbeing of employees.

Conflicting job roles increase anxiety and frustration within employees that is reflected in their performances and stability in managing work and life at the same time (Caesens, Stinglhamber and Ohana, 2016). Another one of the major factors of perceived organisational support can be rewards being provided to employees and characterised as intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. These rewards are supposed to be the major influencer that can help employees in increasing their job satisfaction and mental and emotional stability in life.

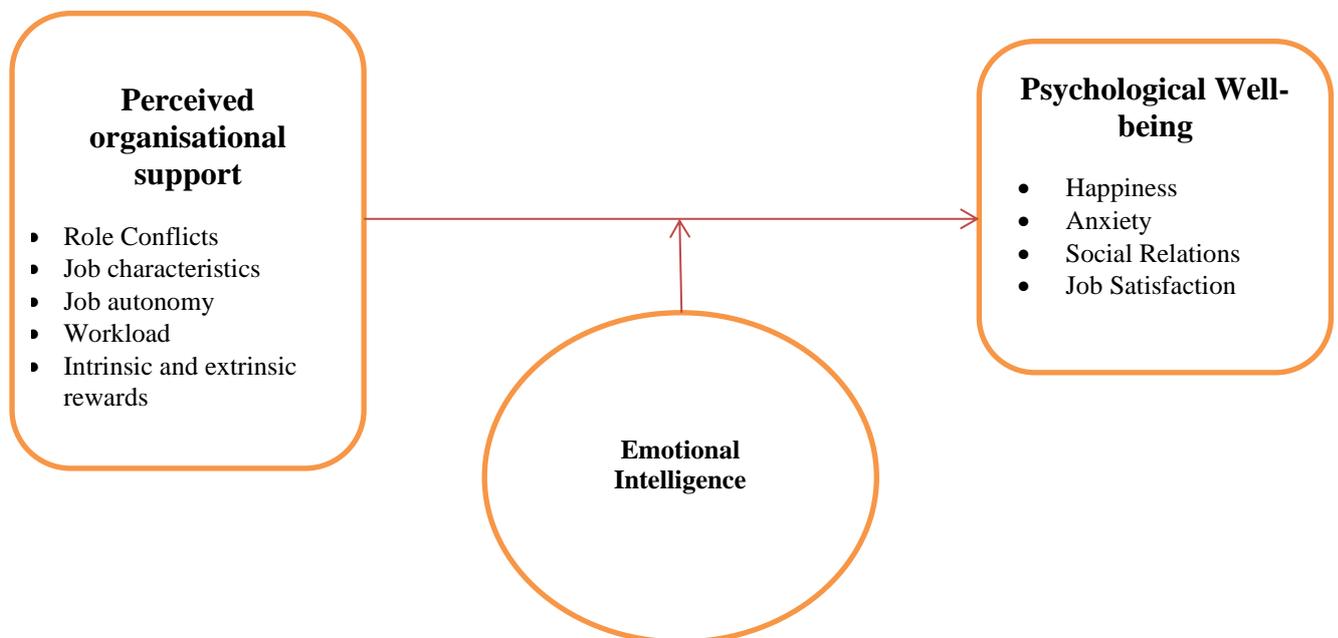
Impact of Perceived Organisational Support on Wellbeing and performance of Employees

Employees perceive organisational support as the best way of increasing their motivation to work better (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Not only this, but the organisational support helps employees in maintaining psychological and emotional stability in their lives as when employees are being supported and valued in their organisation, they feel comfortable

at the organisation and their stress and anxiety levels are lowered. The organisational support being provided to employees helps them in valuing their organisations as they are motivated to perform better. According to Aselage and Eisenberger (2003), perceived organisational support is considered as the major influencer for employees that helps in maintaining a work-life and emotional balance in employees' lives. Furthermore, organisational support enables employees to feel satisfied in their organisations, thus also resulting in high employee performance.

Research Model and Hypothesis

Following is the research model that has been developed for the research. From the figure, it has been identified that perceived organisational support is the independent variable of the study; psychological wellbeing of employees in terms of is considered as the independent variable while emotional intelligence is considered as the moderating variable of the study. The selection of variables has been made by reviewing the study of Caesens, Stinglhamber and Ohana (2016).



Research hypotheses are developed as follows:

- H1: there is a positive and significant impact of perceived organisational support on the psychological well-being of employees
- H2: there is a positive and significant impact of emotional intelligence on the psychological well-being of employees

Research Methods

Research Philosophy and Approach

Since this study is aimed to investigate the impacts of perceived organisational support on the wellbeing and performance of employees, therefore the researcher is intended to use the pragmatism approach in order to collect, arrange, organise and interpret the results that show the validity of results. The pragmatism philosophy is based on the use of both, subjective and objective methods in order to conduct the research where, the use of human participants will help in collecting and evaluating the data (Adhariani, Sciulli and Clift, 2017). The perceived organisational support and wellbeing of employees can be best understood when the researcher approaches the employees by himself/herself and investigate their organisational activities that can affect the wellbeing of employees.

In terms of the research approach, the researcher will select a deductive approach. This is because of the fact the inclusion of human participation in the research will include facts, figures, observations and some statistical data that needs to be analysed using specific scientific methods in order to deduce conclusive results for the study. It has been identified by Bryman and Bell (2015) that the use of the deductive approach is helpful when the researcher is interested to select objective or mixed methods, including statistical and subjective methods to evaluate their views. Since the researcher is aimed to select the deductive approach, research hypotheses are developed that are tested using a statistical approach to determine the impacts of perceived organisational support on the wellbeing of employees.

Research Design

This research is aimed to use the pragmatism philosophy, where the researcher has been given the liberty to select whatever the best method can be used in the research to meet its aim, mixed research design will be used in the research. Flick (2015) identified that the use of mixed methodology is helpful in order to use both, subjective and objective methods in the form of qualitative and quantitative methods to address the research questions, making it more feasible for the researcher to analyse different perspectives of the research problem. This implies that the researcher will use mixed methodology, where both, qualitative and quantitative data will be used in order to determine the impacts of perceived organisational support on the wellbeing of employees. The qualitative research data that will be collected for the study will be from interviews while surveys will be collected as quantitative methods. Both of these methods will be utilised to understand the well-being of employees as per the perceived organisational support being provided to them.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

According to Mkansi and Acheampong (2012), in order to increase the validity of the research data and findings, primary and secondary data needs to be used in the research. Keeping this in mind, the researcher is intended to use both primary and secondary data collection methods so as to avoid any misinterpretation of results. The primary data in this study will be collected from interviews while surveys will be conducted from employees as per the quantitative data collection method. For interviews, general managers of different UK-based firms will be selected and surveys will be conducted from employees to evaluate the perceived organisational support and their wellbeing. For the data collection, 6 UK-based firms will be selected. 10 interviews will be carried out from general managers of these firms in order to evaluate the wellbeing of employees when provided with organisational support.

For surveys, 250 employees of these firms will be selected in order to evaluate their wellbeing and the organisational support provided to them.

The survey questionnaire will be made using 5 points Likert Scale while the Strongly Agree option will be at 0 and Strongly Disagree option is at 4 (0-Strongly Agree, 1-Agree, 2-Neutral, 3-Disagree, 4-Strongly Disagree). For the secondary data collection, various existing studies on the same topic will be selected which include articles, journals, books, and other researches. A close-ended questionnaire will be developed in surveys so that employees can answer immediately about how they perceive their organisational support. The survey questionnaire will help the researcher in identifying the organisational support being provided by the managers at the organisation. Furthermore, interviews will be conducted using semi-structured interview questions that will help in the questioning of employees regarding how they feel and what behaviour they adopt in keeping their employees engaged and satisfied with their jobs. In this way, emotional intelligence will be judged. The data analysis of the data collected from interviews will be done through thematic analysis while correlation and regression tests will be applied to analyse the quantitative data collected through surveys.

Sampling and Sample Size

The researcher will use convenience sampling under the non-probability sampling technique to select the number of interviewees and survey respondents. A total of 250 employees will be selected from 6 UK-based firms for the survey and 10 interviews will be conducted by general managers of these firms.

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