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ATTITUDES AND JOB SATISFACTION (PART 2)

Focus: POS, Employee Engagement, Job Satisfaction
Measurement, and Impacts

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Perceived Organizational Support (POS)

Definition

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) refers to the degree to which employees believe their organization values their contributions and genuinely cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986).

It is not just about rewards — it's about empathy, fairness, and mutual trust between employer and employee.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964):

- Relationships are based on mutual give-and-take.
- If employees feel the organization supports them, they feel obligated to reciprocate with loyalty, commitment, and extra effort.

Key Components of POS

Fair Treatment & Recognition

- Equal opportunities, transparent policies, and acknowledgment of effort.
- Example: Public appreciation in meetings or annual awards.

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Supervisor Support

- Direct managers represent the organization in employees' eyes.
- Empathetic leaders who provide guidance, mentorship, and flexibility enhance POS.

Rewards & Job Conditions

- Competitive pay, health benefits, career development opportunities, and safe working environments signal organizational care.
- Example: Offering training programs or career advancement pathways.

Impact of High POS

- Stronger Loyalty & Commitment: Employees are more likely to stay long-term.
- Reduced Turnover & Absenteeism: Workers feel secure and motivated.
- Better Job Performance: Engaged employees put in discretionary effort (“going beyond job description”).
- Improved Employee Well-Being: Reduced stress, better mental health, and overall job satisfaction.
- Positive Organizational Culture: Encourages collaboration, trust, and motivation across teams.

REAL-WORLD EXAMPLES

- Microsoft: Provides flexible work-from-home policies and wellness programs → employees report higher satisfaction and loyalty.
- Salesforce: Strong recognition culture with regular rewards, employee appreciation days, and community service opportunities.
- Unilever: Offers flexible scheduling and career growth programs to balance personal & professional life.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

DEFINITION

Employee engagement is the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral connection employees have with their organization. It reflects how invested, motivated, and committed they are in contributing to organizational goals.

Dimensions of Engagement

Cognitive Engagement

- Mental focus and deep absorption in tasks.
- Employees understand how their role connects to organizational objectives.
- Example: A software developer who stays updated with new coding languages to enhance project quality.

EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT

- Positive feelings toward work, colleagues, and the organization.
- Employees feel valued, proud, and satisfied in their role.
- Example: A nurse who feels proud serving patients despite challenges.

BEHAVIORAL ENGAGEMENT

- Demonstrated through actions like initiative, persistence, and going beyond job descriptions.
- Example: A sales representative voluntarily helping new teammates to close deals.

BENEFITS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

- Higher Productivity: Engaged employees work harder and smarter, leading to better results.
- Innovation & Creativity: Passionate workers suggest new ideas and solutions.
- Reduced Turnover: Employees feel loyal, lowering recruitment/training costs.
- Customer Satisfaction: Motivated staff provide better service, improving brand reputation.
- Organizational Growth: Direct link to increased profitability and market competitiveness.

Real-World Examples

- Google: Encourages autonomy and creativity (e.g., “20% time” policy to pursue passion projects → Gmail & Google Maps emerged).
- Starbucks: Offers training, recognition programs, and benefits even to part-time employees, creating loyalty.
- Southwest Airlines: Builds a family-like culture with humor, teamwork, and appreciation → high customer satisfaction and low turnover.

Job Satisfaction And Job Performance Link

Definition

- The relationship between how content employees feel with their jobs (job satisfaction) and how effectively they fulfill their responsibilities (job performance).
- It's one of the most researched topics in Organizational Behavior.

Research Evidence

Positive Link (General Trend):

- Meta-analysis by Judge et al. (2001) shows a moderate positive correlation ($r \approx 0.30$) between job satisfaction and performance.
- Satisfied employees are more engaged, productive, and innovative.

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Direction of Influence:

- Satisfaction can lead to performance (happy employees work harder).
- Performance can also increase satisfaction (doing well brings recognition, rewards, and pride).

Dissatisfaction Effects:

- Leads to disengagement, absenteeism, higher turnover, and poor customer service.
- Example: Retail employees unhappy with management show reduced sales effectiveness.

Rewards & Recognition

- Performance is more likely when good work is acknowledged.
- Example: Salesforce uses public recognition & performance-based bonuses → stronger satisfaction–performance link.

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Work Environment

- A safe, supportive, and well-resourced workplace boosts performance from satisfied employees.
- Example: Google's open, collaborative workspaces encourage creativity.

Leadership Style

- Transformational leaders inspire, coach, and provide feedback → satisfied employees perform better.
- Example: Leaders who empower teams see higher discretionary effort.

Job Characteristics (Hackman & Oldham, Job Characteristics Model)

- Variety, autonomy, and feedback increase both satisfaction and performance.

Takeaways

Job Satisfaction ≠ Automatic High Performance

- A happy employee isn't always a productive one (e.g., satisfied but complacent).

But Satisfaction Creates Conditions for Performance

- It reduces stress, enhances commitment, and provides intrinsic motivation.

Balanced Approach Works Best

- Organizations should combine job satisfaction strategies (fair pay, recognition, positive culture) with performance management systems (clear goals, feedback, accountability).

Real-World Examples

- Zappos: High employee satisfaction → outstanding customer service culture → business growth.
- Amazon Warehouse Workers: Reports of dissatisfaction (workload & pressure) → criticism of low engagement despite strong overall company performance.
- Toyota: Engages employees through continuous improvement culture (Kaizen) → both satisfaction and performance are reinforced

Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964)

Social Exchange Theory (SET)

Core Idea

- Proposed by George Homans (1958) and later formalized by Blau (1964).
- Human relationships — personal or professional — function like transactions where people evaluate rewards vs. costs.
- Based on reciprocity: when one party provides support, the other feels obligated to return it.

Key Principles

Reciprocity

- Mutual give-and-take.
- Example: If an employer provides fair pay, recognition, and care, employees reciprocate with loyalty and hard work.

Cost–Benefit Analysis

- People consciously or unconsciously calculate what they invest (time, effort, stress) vs. what they gain (salary, recognition, growth opportunities, respect).

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Trust & Commitment

- Positive exchanges over time build trust and long-term commitment.
- If one side repeatedly fails to deliver, trust is broken → withdrawal behaviors.

Equity & Fairness

- Perception of fairness in exchanges matters as much as the actual exchange.
- Example: Two employees doing equal work but receiving unequal rewards → dissatisfaction.

Application in the Workplace

Perceived Organizational Support (POS)

- Employees evaluate how much the organization values their contribution.
- High POS → employees reciprocate with better performance and engagement.

Leadership

- Leaders who show empathy, mentorship, and fairness strengthen reciprocity.
- Employees become more committed and collaborative.

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Job Satisfaction & Engagement

- When benefits outweigh costs, employees experience pride, motivation, and commitment.
- When costs outweigh benefits, employees disengage, leading to absenteeism or turnover.

Positive Exchange Outcomes

- Higher employee satisfaction & loyalty
- Reduced turnover & absenteeism
- Greater productivity & innovation
- Stronger organizational culture

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Negative Exchange Outcomes

- Withdrawal behaviors (lateness, absenteeism, quiet quitting)
- High turnover & burnout
- Cynicism and low trust in leadership

Real-World Examples

- Google: Provides autonomy, learning opportunities, and recognition → employees give back with creativity and long-term commitment.
- Southwest Airlines: Strong culture of appreciation and humor → employees reciprocate with superior customer service.
- Toxic Workplaces: High stress, poor recognition, or favoritism → employees disengage, underperform, or quit.

Workplace Context

- In organizations, employees and employers are in a social exchange relationship:
 - Organization provides: pay, recognition, support, training, fair treatment.
 - Employee provides: effort, commitment, performance, loyalty.
- This exchange isn't always formal (like salary contracts) → often psychological & emotional (trust, fairness, support).

Connection to POS (Perceived Organizational Support)

- POS is a direct application of this theory.
- When employees perceive that the organization cares about their well-being and values their work:
 - They reciprocate with higher job satisfaction, stronger emotional attachment (affective commitment), and reduced turnover.
- If employees feel ignored or undervalued:
 - They may reduce effort, show disengagement, or leave the organization.

Applications in HR And Management

- Engagement Programs: Employee engagement initiatives (team recognition, flexible policies) are effective because they create positive exchanges.
- Retention Strategies: Supportive managers foster trust and loyalty, reducing turnover.
- Performance Management: Recognition and fairness → stronger motivation to give back through high performance.

Examples in Practice

- Google: Known for employee-friendly policies (free meals, flexible work, career growth opportunities). Employees reciprocate with innovation and commitment.
- Small Firms: Even simple gestures like public recognition, birthday celebrations, or wellness benefits can increase loyalty, showing that support doesn't always require huge budgets.

Key Criticism

- Theory assumes all employees reciprocate positively → but some may take advantage without giving back.
- It doesn't always account for individual differences (some people value support more, others just want higher pay).

THANK YOU