The Role of Leadership Styles as a Moderating Factor in the Relationship between Perceived Organizational Support (POS) and Job Satisfaction (JS) among Malaysian Expatriates in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

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Abstract
This study examines how leadership style affects the link between perceived organizational support (POS) and job satisfaction (JS) among Malaysian expatriates in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nations. This study featured 150 Malaysian expatriate respondents working in the GCC and focused on analyzing charismatic, transactional, passive, and authoritarian leadership styles. The study findings indicate a strong and positive correlation between POS (Perceived Organizational Support) and JS (Job Satisfaction). The leadership style plays a crucial role as a moderator in this relationship. The statistical analysis reveals a p-value of 0.001 and a R^2 value of 0.839, indicating a high level of significance and explaining a substantial proportion of the variance. This discovery highlights the fact that a leadership style that is effective can enhance job satisfaction by means of robust organizational support. This study has ramifications for organizations in the GCC to enhance assistance for expatriates, while establishing a more favorable work climate.
Keywords: Leadership Styles, Perceived Organizational Support, Job Satisfaction, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

Introduction
In the era of globalization, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, which include Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, UAE, and Saudi Arabia, have become major destinations for expatriate workers from various backgrounds. These countries attract workers to meet the labor demands in vital industries such as oil and gas and construction. While professional opportunities and benefits, such as increased wages, may be attractive to workers, they also face significant challenges, including cultural differences, adapting to diverse organizational practices, and unfamiliar leadership styles compared to their home countries. These discrepancies can impact employees' perception of organizational support and their level of job satisfaction. The leadership style of the employer in the GCC region has a substantial

impact on whether the experience of expatriate employees will be advantageous or lead to stress and dissatisfaction. Therefore, it is essential to understand how cultural factors, organizational practices, and leadership styles interact to shape the experience, satisfaction, and performance of expatriate personnel in the GCC.

The problem statement of this study underscores the substantial presence of Malaysian expatriates in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, which is indicative of the robust economic and social connections between the two nations. Many expatriates are drawn to GCC jobs, but cultural and organizational differences present unique challenges. Since few studies have examined Malaysian expats' experiences in the GCC, particularly in terms of perceived organizational support (POS) and work satisfaction, more study is needed. Leadership style as a moderating element in POS-JS relationships has not been fully studied. Leadership styles—charismatic, transactional, and autocratic—may affect job satisfaction and support. Thus, this study fills the knowledge gap and advises GCC organizations on how to better support expatriate workers. In an international workforce, this will boost job happiness, productivity, and retention.

Perceived organizational support (POS) plays a critical role in the job satisfaction and performance of expatriate employees in GCC countries, as evidenced by the literature review of this study. Previous research, including Takeuchi et al. (2021), has verified that POS has a positive impact on job satisfaction. Additionally, the leadership behavior of expatriate managers is acknowledged as a critical factor in the management of expatriate workers (Malaeb et al., 2022). Furthermore, the research demonstrates that the employer's leadership style serves as a moderator in the relationship between job satisfaction and POS. This suggests that a combination of effective leadership and robust organizational support can enhance the job satisfaction of expatriates. The study of the interaction between these factors is of great importance in the context of GCC, as supportive leadership styles such as charismatic and transactional can amplify the positive impact of POS on job satisfaction.

Laxmi and Rajanikant Verma (2023), also contributed to this understanding by investigating the role of job satisfaction as a mediator between POS and organizational commitment in the service industry. The results demonstrated a robust relationship between POS and organizational commitment, which was mediated by job satisfaction. This reveals that job satisfaction is a critical factor in the enhancement of the relationship between employee performance and organizational support. From the theoretical implications, previous study explained the importance of enhancing perceived organizational support and employees' organizational-based self-esteem in the effort to reduce employees' involvement in CWB (Abas, Omar, Halim & Hafidz, 2015). Nor Sabrena Norizan, Ahmad Fadhly Arham, Ahmad Firdhaus Arham, Fatanah Jislan, Siti Norashikin Bashirun (2024) strongly postulates that by examining the role of POS in different contextual studies, it is highly anticipated that the direct links between transformational leadership and the performance of an organization can be enhanced. Another similar study by Nur Atiqah Abdullah, Norazila Mat & Nurfaten Amyza Ameran (2022), showed that psychological capital and organizational support have a significant impact and influence on job performance. Nur Alissa Mahmood, Wan Ahmad Munsif Wan Pa (2023), has found that awareness of the necessity of strong organizational support can help employees volunteer, both directly and indirectly which in turn contributes to a higher level of understanding in volunteering throughout the organization as well as

outside the organization which will boost future volunteer retention and host the organization's visibility and productivity.

The significance of POS in enhancing expatriate job satisfaction and performance is also substantiated by additional research conducted by Cao et al. (2014), and Kawai & Strange (2014). Hngoi CL, Abdullah N-A, Wan Sulaiman WS and Zaiedy Nor NI (2024), found that the perceived organizational support has a collectively significant relationship with organizational commitment. Another similar study by Zainuddin Roji, Muhammad Hilmi Jalil, Azman Ismail (2024), found that there is a relationship between perceived organizational support, work well-being and organizational commitment. However, these studies also underscore the necessity of considering factors such as leadership style and work adaptation in a foreign environment in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of expatriate employee performance. This study implies that future research should investigate the role of supervisor leadership style as a moderator in the relationship between POS and job satisfaction. This could offer a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that affect the work experience of expatriates in the GCC.

Koen Buisman (2009) explored how leadership style affects hierarchical conflict and staff contentment. The study indicated that leadership styles affected this association. This study emphasizes the importance of leadership in avoiding conflict and improving employee satisfaction, which affects POS and job satisfaction. Arshadi and Zare (2016), examined the complex relationship between leadership effectiveness, perceived organizational support (POS), job contentment, and work ability in an Iranian industrial organization. This study shows that good leadership and strong perceived organizational support (POS) improve job happiness and work ability. These factors improve employee performance together.

Takeuchi et al. (2021), explored how expatriate leadership style, particularly planning and consultation, influences job satisfaction in American hospitality. The study found that good expatriate leadership, including planning and consultation, boosts job satisfaction. These findings are important in the GCC, where expatriates operate in industries that require strategic planning and constant interaction with local workers. Liu and Ipe (2010) explored how POS and the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) leadership style affect expatriate engagement to their organization. This study shows that supervisor leadership moderates the positive effect of POS on expatriate job satisfaction and commitment. It stresses that supportive leadership is essential for expatriate retention. To conclude, the research strongly suggests that POS (Perceived Organizational Support) and leadership style significantly affect job satisfaction. This relationship affects employee performance and well-being.
Therefore, this research aims to explore the following research questions.
(1) What is the level of perceived organizational support received by Malaysian expatriates working in GCC countries?
(2) What is the level of job satisfaction among Malaysian expatriates working in GCC countries?
(3) What is the relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction among Malaysian expatriates working in GCC countries?
(4) What is the role of leadership style in influencing the relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction received by Malaysian expatriates working in GCC countries?

(5) What is the relationship between leadership style and employee satisfaction?
(6) What is the relationship between leadership style and perceived organizational support?

Thus, this research greatly increases understanding of how leadership style and perceived organizational support affect job satisfaction of Malaysian expats in GCC nations. This study shows that effective leadership and strong organizational support improve expatriate employee welfare and productivity. This study fills a gap in the literature and offers practical suggestions to businesses on how to improve management, particularly in creating a more supportive workplace. In conclusion, our research highlights the necessity for organization-specific help and direction. In a competitive globalized environment, job happiness and worker quality are crucial.

Method

Sampling Technique

In this study, the sampling technique utilized was non-probability sampling, specifically purposive sampling, which focused on Malaysian expatriates residing in GCC countries. This method was selected to ensure that participants met specific criteria relevant to the research, allowing for a more targeted and meaningful collection of data regarding their experiences with organizational support and job satisfaction. The purposive sampling approach facilitated the gathering of insights that accurately represented the unique challenges faced by this demographic.

Additionally, the study employed G*Power for sample size estimation, it was chosen due to its flexibility in accommodating various statistical tests and its ability to incorporate parameters such as effect size, significance level, and power analysis.

Participants

The study encompassed a sample of 150 Malaysian expatriates employed across various Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nations, including Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Saudi Arabia. To ensure a representative sample of the diverse and growing Malaysian expatriate community within the GCC, particularly in sectors requiring skilled labor, participants were selected through a random sampling method. This approach aimed to capture a broad and accurate reflection of the experiences and perceptions of expatriates working in different industries and firms within the region.

Participants were requested to complete detailed questionnaires, which sought their insights into their experiences with Perceived Organizational Support (POS), Job Satisfaction (JS), and the Leadership Styles implemented within their organizations. By examining these variables, the study provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of organizational support mechanisms & leadership practices in enhancing job satisfaction within this expatriate workforce.

Instruments

This research uses a systematic quantitative methodology, utilizing questionnaires as the primary means of data collecting. This questionnaire comprises multiple parts specifically formulated to assess three primary constructs: Perception of Organizational Support (POS),

Job Satisfaction (JS), and Leadership Style. The questionnaire employs a Likert scale in each part to evaluate the extent to which respondents agree with the pertinent statements.

A set of surveys were distributed to a group of respondents selected through a random process. were subsequently asked to fill out the surveys, including details about their employment experiences and perceptions. The data gathering technique is systematically conducted to guarantee the accuracy, relevance, and alignment with the study's objectives. The questionnaire was distributed both manually and online, based on the convenience of the respondents, in order to optimize the response rate.

Demographic data and responses to the questionnaire were summarized using descriptive statistics. Concurrently, inferential analysis was employed to ascertain the correlation between perceived organizational support (POS) and job satisfaction (JS), as well as the influence of leadership style as a moderating factor. This analysis employs correlation and multiple regression to examine the research hypothesis and ascertain the significance of the relationship between the variables.

This research verifies the validity and reliability of the instrument by assessing reliability through the utilization of Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Construct validity is established by doing factor analysis and by referring to prior studies conducted in a comparable context. This methodical technique guarantees that the study can offer a precise comprehension of the correlation between perceived organizational support, work satisfaction, and leadership style among Malaysian expatriates in the GCC countries.

Pilot Test
Before the actual study was conducted, a pilot study was carried out. This test was conducted to assess the reliability of the research instrument and to identify any potential issues that might arise for future respondents. If there were any problems with the research instrument, the researcher was able to review the wording and phrasing of the questions to help respondents better understand the instrument. According to Kumar (2018), an instrument that can be considered reliable must demonstrate a high level of consistency and stability. Internal consistency was calculated using the Cronbach's Alpha test. A Cronbach's Alpha value greater than 0.60 was considered acceptable.

Results
The demographic analysis of the study included a sample of 150 Malaysian expatriates working across six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. The participants comprised 56.7% males and 43.3% females, indicating a predominantly male representation. In terms of age distribution, the majority of respondents were between 27 to 58 years old, with 42.7% aged 27-42 and 44.7% aged 43-58. Only a small fraction, 2.0%, fell within the 59-69 age range. Regarding educational qualifications, a significant portion of the participants held a bachelor's degree or equivalent (71.3%), while 19.3% had a master's degree and 5.3% possessed a doctoral degree. The expatriates were distributed across various GCC countries, with the highest representation from Saudi Arabia (24.7%), followed by Qatar (18.7%) and the UAE (18.0%). This demographic profile provides valuable context for understanding the perspectives of Malaysian expatriates in relation to perceived organizational support and job satisfaction within their respective work environments.

The study investigated the relationship between perceived organizational support (POS) and job satisfaction (JS) among Malaysian expatriates, focusing on the moderating effects of different leadership styles. Overall, the findings highlight the critical role of effective leadership in fostering a supportive work environment that enhances job satisfaction among Malaysian expatriates in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. Below is the result based on the hypothesis: -

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between organizational support perception and job satisfaction among Malaysian expatriates.

Result: Supported - Higher perceived organizational support leads to greater job satisfaction.

H2: Leadership style (charismatic, transactional, passive, autocratic) moderates the relationship between organizational support perception and job satisfaction.

Result: Supported - Leadership style influences how organizational support affects job satisfaction.

H3[a]: Charismatic leadership positively influences the relationship between organizational support perception and job satisfaction.

Result: Supported - Charismatic leaders enhance the positive effect of organizational support on job satisfaction.

H3[b]: Transactional leadership positively influences the relationship between organizational support perception and job satisfaction.

Result: Supported - Transactional leaders also strengthen the positive link between organizational support and job satisfaction.

Table 1

Demographic Background of the Respondents

Category	Demography Information (n=150)	(*f*)	(%)
Gender	Male	85	56.7
	Female	65	43.3
Age	22-26 years	16	10.7
	27-42 years	64	42.7
	43-58 years	67	44.7
	59-69 years	3	2.0
Educational Background	SPM/ Secondary Certificate	0	0
	STPM/Diploma/Foundation	6	4.0
	Bachelor's Degree	107	71.3
	Master's Degree	29	19.3
	Doctorate	8	5.3
Country in GCC	Bahrain	11	7.3
	Kuwait	24	16.0
	Oman	23	15.3
	Qatar	28	18.7
	Arab Saudi	37	24.7
	UAE	27	18.0
Working Sector	Public Sector	9	6.0
	Government-Linked Company (GLC)	11	7.3
	Private Sector	130	86.7

	Administrative & Management	29	19.3
	Professional, Scientific, and Technical	57	38.0
	Clerical Support	1	0.7
	Service and Sales	1	0.7
	Operators and Asemblers	1	0.7
	Construction	1	0.7
Job Type	Transportation & Storage	3	2.0
	Accommodation & Food Services	1	0.7
	Information & Communication	8	5.3
	Financial & Insurance Activities	4	2.7
	Education	3	2.0
	Health & Social Work	12	8.0
	Electricity, Gas, Steam, & Air Conditioning	25	16.7
	Other Service Activities	4	2.7
Years Working in Current Organization	Less than 6 months	6	4.0
	6 months - 1 years	7	4.7
	1 - 2 years	31	20.7
	2 - 5 years	83	55.3
	5 years or more	23	15.3

Table 2
Regression Analysis of the Relationship between POS, JS, with Leadership Style as a Moderator

| Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	β	Std. error	β	t	p
(Constant)	2.600	1.004		2.590	0.011
POS	0.105	0.180	0.191	0.580	0.000
MLQ	0.058	0.304	0.043	0.192	0.000
POS*Gaya Kepimpinan	0.051	0.052	0.449	0.972	0.001

*Responding Variable: Job Satisfaction

Table 3
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.916a	0.839	0.826	1.341

Table 4
Moderating Effect of POS and Leadership Style on Job Satisfaction
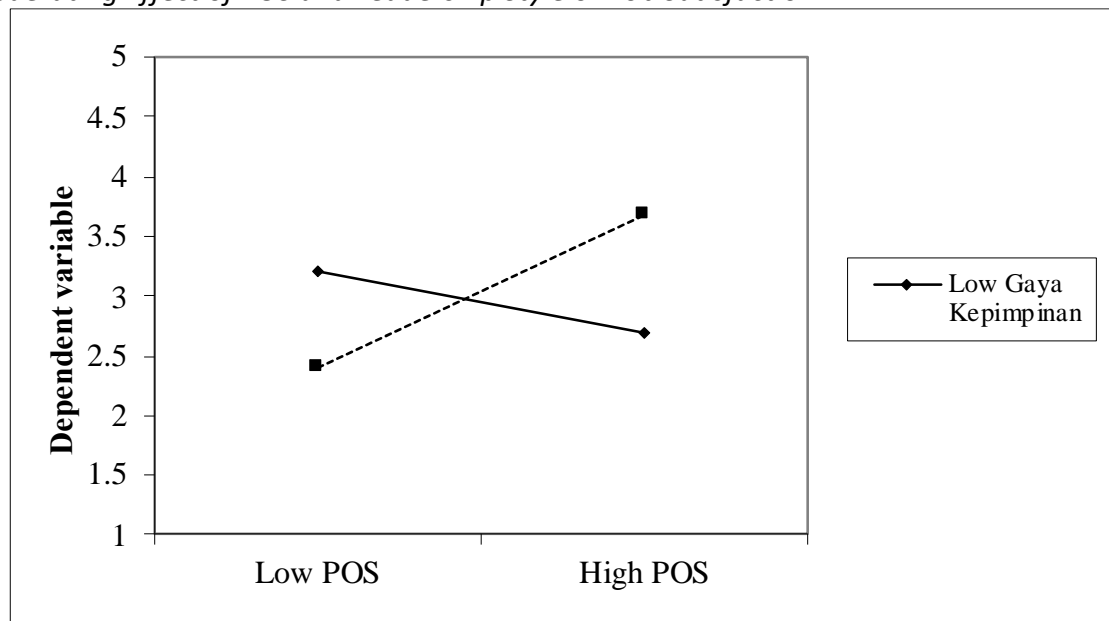
Based on Table 2, the significance value of the moderating variable between POS (Perceived Organizational Support) and Leadership Style is 0.001 (<0.05). Therefore, it can be concluded that Leadership Style can moderate the influence of the POS variable on Job Satisfaction (JS). Given on Table 3, the R Square value is 0.839, it means that the influence of the POS (Perceived Organizational Support) variable on JS (Job Satisfaction) after accounting for Leadership Style is 83.9%. This indicates that 83.9% of the variance in job satisfaction can be explained by the combined effects of perceived organizational support and leadership style. Meanwhile, on Table 4 it is indicating that there is an interaction between Leadership Style, POS (Perceived Organizational Support), and JS (Job Satisfaction).

Discussion

The discussion section begins by emphasizing the importance of understanding the relationship between perceived organizational support (POS) and job satisfaction (JS) among Malaysian expatriates in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. The study's findings reveal that POS significantly influences JS, highlighting the necessity for organizations to cultivate a supportive environment that enhances employee satisfaction and overall well-being.

a) Perceived Organizational Support and Job Satisfaction
The results confirm a strong positive correlation between POS and JS, indicating that when expatriates feel supported by their organizations, their job satisfaction levels increase. This finding aligns with existing literature, suggesting that organizational support plays a critical role in fostering a positive work experience, particularly for expatriates who may face unique challenges in foreign environments.

b) Moderating Role of Leadership Styles
Charismatic and transactional leadership styles were found to enhance the positive impact of organizational support on job satisfaction, suggesting that leaders who engage and motivate

their employees can significantly improve their work experience. In contrast, passive and autocratic leadership styles were shown to diminish this relationship, indicating that ineffective leadership can hinder employee satisfaction.

c) Implications for Leadership
The findings underscore the critical role of effective leadership in maximizing the benefits of organizational support. Organizations should prioritize developing leaders who adopt charismatic or transactional approaches, as these styles are associated with higher levels of employee satisfaction. By fostering a leadership culture that emphasizes support and engagement, organizations can create a more positive work environment for expatriates.

Limitations of the Study
The discussion acknowledges certain limitations of the research, including the predominance of respondents from the private sector and the underrepresentation of older expatriates. These factors may limit the generalizability of the findings, suggesting that future studies should aim to include a more diverse sample to better understand the experiences of expatriates across different sectors and age groups.

Recommendations for Future Research
Finally, the study concludes with recommendations for future research to further explore the dynamics of POS and JS in various contexts. Investigating these relationships among different demographic groups, particularly in the public sector, could provide valuable insights. Additionally, examining the long-term effects of leadership styles on expatriate satisfaction and performance would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing expatriate work experiences.

Conclusion
The study reveals that Malaysian expatriates in GCC countries experience a significant relationship between perceived organizational support and job satisfaction, with leadership style acting as a crucial moderating factor. Expatriates perceive high levels of organizational support, which positively influences their job satisfaction, reflecting a growing trend where employees seek environments that recognize their contributions and well-being. Leadership styles, particularly those that are supportive and communicative, enhance this relationship, indicating that effective leadership is essential in fostering a positive work atmosphere. The findings suggest that expatriates are increasingly valuing their work experiences and the support they receive, which aligns with contemporary career expectations that prioritize personal fulfillment and job satisfaction over traditional organizational loyalty.

Moreover, the study highlights the importance of adapting leadership approaches to meet the diverse needs of expatriates, as their job satisfaction is influenced not only by organizational support but also by the leadership dynamics within their workplaces. This shift underscores a broader trend in the workforce where employees, particularly expatriates, are seeking more than just job security; they desire meaningful engagement and recognition in their roles. Overall, the results indicate a transformation in the expatriate work experience, where supportive leadership and organizational recognition are pivotal in enhancing job satisfaction, ultimately contributing to a more engaged and productive workforce.

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