



# Perceived Organizational Support Through a Lens of Racial Tension and Challenging Times

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## INTRODUCTION

### BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- Perceived organizational support (POS) is defined as the degree to which employees believe their organizations cares about them and their well-being.
- During turbulent times, it is particularly important for organizations to show support and care/concern for its employees.
- The present study focused on POS during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, where employees faced a myriad of interrelated stressors including a global pandemic, economic downturn, and racial tensions.

### CURRENT STUDY

- According to organizational support theory (Eisenberger et al., 2020), if employees perceive their organizations cares about their well-being, they will be more likely to engage in positive behaviors for the organization through social exchange and self-enhancement processes.
  - Social exchange theory supports the notion that when an organization displays POS, employees will feel indebted to the organization based on reciprocity norms (Settoon et al., 1996).
  - High POS may also fulfill employees' socioemotional needs for esteem, emotional support, and affiliation (self-enhancement), resulting in increased commitment to the organization (Meyer et al., 2006).
  - POS may also reduce the level of stress and pressure felt by employees during turbulent times (Kurtessis et al., 2017).
- Three aspects of POS will be examined:
  - Perceived supervisor support: employee's perceptions of executive support in the organization.
  - Perceived coworker support: employee's perceptions concerning their coworker's attitudes and behaviors
  - Inclusion climate: employee's perceptions that the organization's values give equal access to all identity groups.
- Three outcomes of POS will be examined: burnout, organizational commitment (OC), and intention to resign.

**HYPOTHESIS 1:** Perceived supervisor support will be (a) negatively related to burnout, (b) positively related to OC, and (c) negatively related to intention to resign.

**HYPOTHESIS 2:** Perceived coworker support will be (a) negatively related to burnout, (b) positively related to OC, and (c) negatively related to intention to resign.

**HYPOTHESIS 3:** Inclusion climate will be (a) negatively related to burnout, (b) positively related to OC, and (c) negatively related to intention to resign.

## METHOD

### PARTICIPANTS

- Participants completed online self-report surveys across two time points – September 2021 and May 2023. Our sample includes 170 part- and full-time employees in the United States ( $M_{age} = 46.5$ , 62.4% White, 56.5% female).

### MEASURES

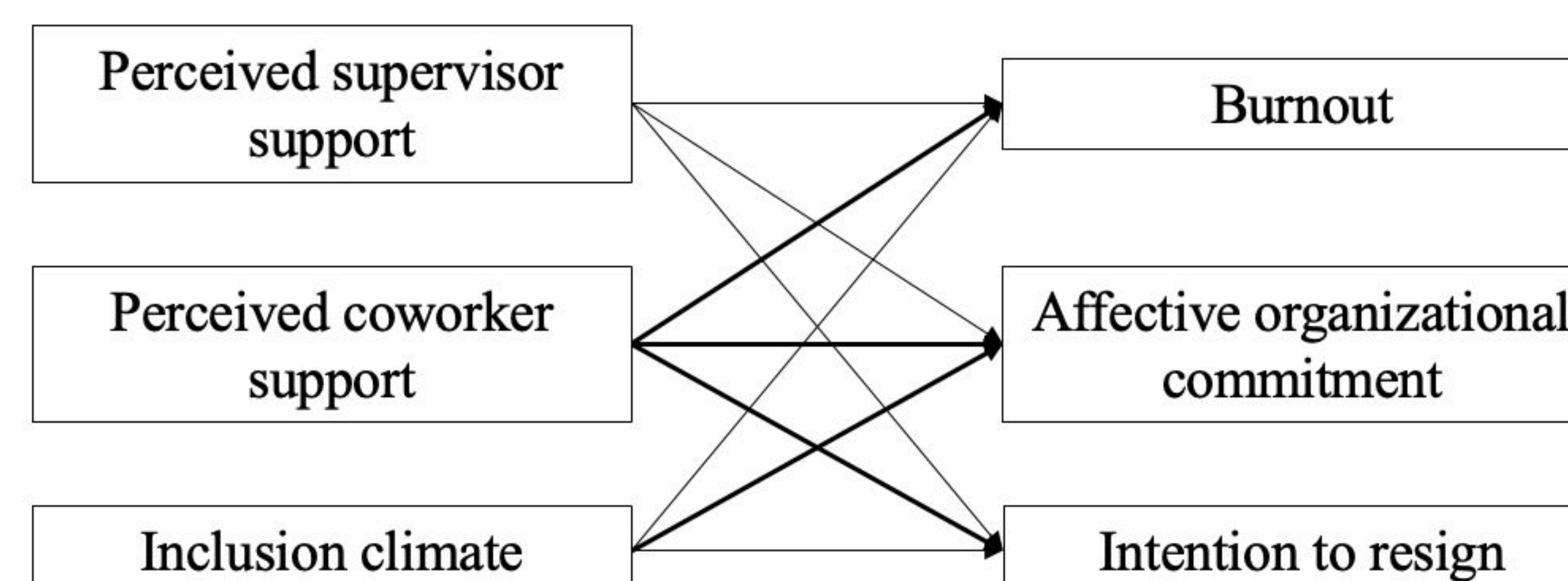
- Perceived supervisor support** was assessed during Time 1 using a 15-item measure scale (Deconnick & Johnson, 2009).  $\alpha = .93$
- Perceived coworker support** was measured using Schaufeli Job Demands Resources Questionnaire during Time 2 with a 3-item measure scale developed by (2015).  $\alpha = .80$
- Inclusion climate** was evaluated during Time 1 with a 15-item scale (Nishii, 2013).  $\alpha = .96$
- Burnout** was measured during Time 2 with a 23-item measure developed by (Schaufeli et al., 2020).  $\alpha = .96$
- Affective organizational commitment** was assessed during Time 2 with a 8-item scale developed by (Allen & Meyer, 1990).  $\alpha = .92$
- Intention to resign** was assessed during Time 2 with a two item scale developed by (Seashore et al., 1982).  $\alpha = .80$

## DESCRIPTIVES & CORRELATIONS

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Perceived supervisor support	4.08	.94	–				
2. Perceived coworker support	3.65	.81	.53***	–			
3. Inclusion climate	3.74	.92	.71***	.45***	–		
4. Burnout	2.29	.76	-.25**	-.49***	-.25***	–	
5. Affective organizational commitment	3.35	.97	.46***	.51***	.52***	-.45***	–
6. Intention to resign	2.99	1.73	-.36***	-.46***	-.31***	-.51***	-.70***

Note. \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

## PROPOSED MODEL



Note. Bolded arrows represent statistically significant relationships.

## RESULTS

### HYPOTHESIS 1

- H1a was not supported**, as perceived supervisor support was not significantly related to burnout ( $b = .06, p = .459$ ).
- H1b was not supported**, as perceived supervisor support was not significantly related to organizational commitment ( $b = .04, p = .715$ ).
- H1c was not supported**, as perceived supervisor support was not significantly related to intention to resign ( $b = -.22, p = .230$ ).

### HYPOTHESIS 2

- H2a was supported**, as perceived coworker support was significantly related to burnout ( $b = -.46, p < .001$ ).
- H2b was supported**, as perceived coworker support was significantly related to organizational commitment ( $b = .40, p < .001$ ).
- H2c was supported**, as perceived coworker support was significantly related to intention to resign ( $b = -.78, p < .001$ ).

### HYPOTHESIS 3

- H3a was not supported**, as inclusion climate was not significantly related to burnout ( $b = -.07, p = .402$ ).
- H3b was supported**, as inclusion climate was significantly related to organizational commitment ( $b = .37, p < .001$ ).
- H3c was not supported**, as inclusion climate was not significantly related to intention to resign ( $b = -.12, p = .523$ ).

## DISCUSSION

### MAIN FINDINGS

- Results suggest that perceived coworker support is an important aspect of POS, as this variable was significantly related to lower burnout and intention to resign, and higher affective organizational commitment.
- Surprisingly, perceived supervisor support was not significantly related to any outcomes. However, it should be noted relationships between supervisor support and outcomes were significant at the bivariate level and there were high intercorrelations among POS variables; suggesting multicollinearity may be affecting these results.
- Inclusion climate was found to positively and significantly relate to affective organizational commitment, which suggests that employees who experience inclusivity at work are more committed to their organizations.

### IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Informs research on the importance of inclusion climate for employees' affective commitment to their organizations.
- Highlights the importance of perceived coworker support. Organizations would benefit from implementing programs that emphasize the importance of strong coworker relationships and provide environments that foster them (i.e., coworker understanding and engagement trainings, team building).
- Given the high intercorrelations among aspects of POS, future research should examine relative importance of POS with outcomes.