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From Developmental Support to Psychological Ownership

- Focusing on the Role of Gratitude toward the Organization -

조직의 개발 지원과 심리적 주인의식

- 조직에 대한 감사의 역할을 중심으로 -

2023 년 8 월

서울대학교 대학원
경영학과 경영학 전공
이 원 준

From Developmental Support to Psychological Ownership

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Abstract

From Developmental Support to Psychological Ownership

- Focusing on the Role of Gratitude toward the Organization -

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Gratitude in the work environment can yield benefits for both employees and organizations. However, existing knowledge on workplace gratitude remains limited and mainly focuses on gratitude at the interpersonal level. Utilizing the affect theory of social exchange (ATSE) and goal facilitation theory, this research uncovers novel antecedents and consequences of gratitude toward the organization. This research utilized data from 133 employees based in the US, collected through a 3-wave survey. Statistical analyses such as multiple regressions, mediation analysis, and moderation analysis were done using SPSS and the PROCESS Macro. The results confirmed that organizational support for development (OSD) is conducive to enhancing workers' gratitude toward the

organization, which, in turn, leads to organization-based psychological ownership. Meanwhile, employees' future work self-salience (FWSS) strengthened the positive influence of OSD upon gratitude toward the organization. The study found that positive HR practices, such as OSD, can be a source of gratitude, and that employee individual differences can also influence the emergence of gratitude. This study is meaningful in that it provides theoretical and practical implications for improving our understanding of employee gratitude in an organizational context.

Keywords: Organizational support for development, Gratitude toward the organization, Psychological ownership, Future work self-salience, Affect theory of social exchange, Goal facilitation theory

Student Number: 2020-20804

Table of Contents

Chapter 1. Introduction 1

Chapter 2. Theoretical Background and Hypotheses 6

2.1. Literature Review 6
2.1.1 Gratitude in Organizations 6
2.1.2 Antecedents of gratitude in organizations 7

2.2. Hypotheses Development 9
2.2.1 Affect Theory of Social Exchange (ATSE) 9
2.2.2 OSD and Gratitude toward the Organization 11
2.2.3 The Role of FWSS as a Moderator 14
2.2.4 Consequence of Gratitude in Organizations 17
2.2.5 Gratitude toward the Organization
Leads to Psychological Ownership 18

Chapter 3. Methods 23

3.1. Samples and Procedure 23
3.1. Measures 24

Chapter 4. Results 25

4.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis 25
4.2. Descriptive Statistics 26
4.3. Hypothesis Tests 30

Chapter 5. Discussions 33

5.1. Theoretical Implications 34
5.2. Practical Implications 38
5.3. Limitations and Directions for Future Research 39

Chapter 6. Conclusion 42

Bibliography 44

Abstract in Korean 59

List of Figures

Figure 1. Research Model 5
Figure 2. The Moderating Effect of FWSS 31

Lists of Tables

Table 1. Model Fit Indices 27
Table 2. Descriptive Statistics. 28
Table 3. Regression Analysis 29
Table 4. The Result of Moderated Mediation 32
Table 5. The Summary of Results 33

Chapter 1. Introduction

Discrete emotions are an important driver of employees' attitudes and behaviors at work (Ashkanasy & Dorris, 2017). Among discrete emotions, gratitude has received growing attention from management scholars. Gratitude is a positive emotion that occurs after obtaining advantages from others (Wood et al., 2008). A mounting volume of research has endorsed the significance of gratitude in the organizational context, especially in producing benefits for the organization as well as for employees (Fehr et al., 2017; Locklear et al., 2022). Prior research has proven that gratitude is linked to employees' wellness and enhances work performance and other-oriented discretionary behaviors (Locklear et al., 2021; Sawyer et al., 2022), contributing to a sustainable work environment. Indeed, there are increasing attempts to encourage gratitude by introducing interventions at work (Cunha et al., 2019; Locklear et al., 2020). Therefore, a better understanding of gratitude at work is essential, given the multitude of outcomes associated with gratitude.

However, despite the recent increase in interest and advances in theories of gratitude, it is still not clear which factors lead to gratitude in the workplace and what are the possible consequences. Prior research on antecedents of gratitude in organizational settings mainly focused on interactions between organizational members such as supervisors and coworkers at the event level (Spence et al., 2014; Zhan et al., 2021). In those studies, gratitude was mostly directed at a particular individual. However, employees can also be grateful for intangible entities such as the organization they are working for (Tsang et al., 2021; Ng, 2016). Although gratitude directed at organizational members can be related to gratitude toward the organization, a

more fine-grained approach is needed for a more accurate understanding of gratitude in the organization. Moreover, HR practices and policies can also influence employees' experience within the organization, thus serving as a possible source of gratitude toward the organization (Choudhary et al., 2020). Given the dearth of research regarding possible antecedents of gratitude directed at the organization, an examination of various factors in the organization is needed to extend the knowledge of gratitude.

Further, much of the work dealing with antecedents of gratitude generally neglected the role of individual differences in influencing gratitude emergence. Theoretical evidence suggests that individual differences may influence the manifestation of gratitude. According to gratitude literature, how individuals interpret the received benefits plays a vital role in shaping the level of gratitude (Ferh et al., 2017; Sun et al., 2019). Indeed, how employees perceive the value and relevance of the benefits they receive can impact the process of gratitude emergence (McCullough et al., 2001). Failure to account for those boundary conditions can be problematic.

Lastly, the consequences of gratitude should also be examined, given the unique affiliative nature. It has been widely noted that gratitude promotes reciprocal behaviors toward the benefactor (Ma et al., 2017). However, unlike indebtedness, which is also an emotion that arises after receiving benefits from the benefactor, gratitude facilitates a strong relationship maintenance motive that goes beyond positive reciprocity (Gordon et al., 2012). Subsequently, gratitude forms the foundation for building long-term relationships. Therefore,

it would be worthwhile to investigate whether employees' gratitude toward the organization may facilitate employees' affiliative attachment to the organization.

This study aims to tackle three research goals. Firstly, this study aims to examine antecedents of gratitude toward the organization. Based on the affect theory of social exchange (Lawler, 2001), this research addresses the question of how organizational support for development (OSD) can encourage workers' gratitude toward the organization. The affect theory of social exchange provides a useful theoretical structure for understanding the process of gratitude emergence in response to certain HR practices at the organization. Based on this theory, I theorize that OSD can give rise to gratitude toward the organization as it fosters employees' positive evaluation of the exchange relationship with the organization.

Secondly, this research seeks to discover a boundary condition that impacts the gratitude emergence process in response to OSD. According to gratitude literature, the emergence of gratitude is heavily influenced by individuals' interpretation of received benefits (McCullough et al., 2001). Although OSD provides positive benefits for employees such as performance enhancement, the extent to which those benefits will be valued may vary depending on individual differences. Future work self-salience (FWSS) can be characterized as the level to which one has a clear mental image of one's working self (Strauss et al., 2012), and it may influence how employees perceive value from OSD. I contend that FWSS amplifies the positive impact of OSD on gratitude toward the organization.

Lastly, this study seeks to discover the consequences of gratitude toward the organization. In line with the affect theory of social exchange,

individuals arrive at decisions regarding relationship maintenance by relying on the emotions that stem from their social exchange relationships (Lawler, 2001). As gratitude is associated with strong relationship maintenance motives (Locklear et al., 2001), it seems plausible that grateful employees develop a positive attachment to the organization and increase their investment in the organization, leading to organization-based psychological ownership. As such, I posit that gratitude toward the organization mediates the relationship between OSD and organization-based psychological ownership.

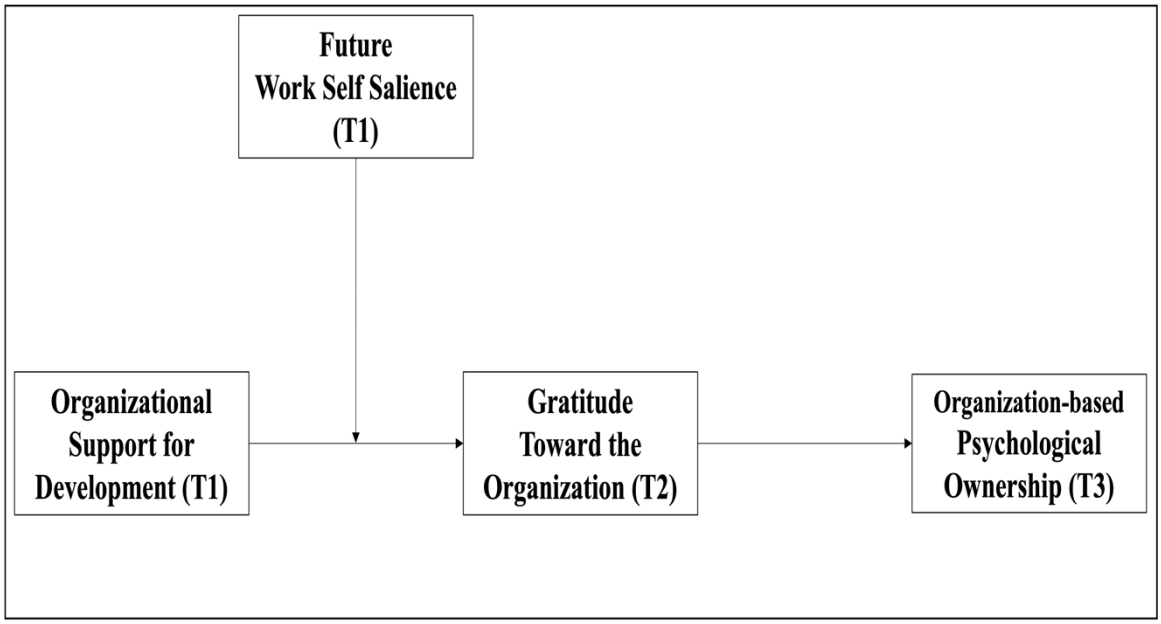
The current research (summarized in Figure 1) represents an attempt to extend the knowledge of gratitude in an organizational context in several ways. First, by advancing the theory of gratitude emergence in organizations, this study aspires to boost our comprehension of potential antecedents of discrete emotions. In doing so, this study identifies unexplored antecedents of gratitude toward the organization, namely organizational support for development. Concerning gratitude literature, scholars have largely focused on gratitude arising from interpersonal relationships (Spence et al., 2014; Li et al., 2022), but few have examined factors related to gratitude directed at the organization. This study proposes that helpful and positive HR practices can also evoke employees' gratitude, enriching our knowledge of gratitude in the organization.

Second, this research extends the existing literature concerning the outcomes and effects of gratitude. Regarding gratitude and its role in boosting psychological ownership, previous research has proposed an association between gratitude and feelings of liking and attachment to the benefactor (Lawler et al., 2001). By linking this study to the gratitude literature which states the role of gratitude in fostering employees' affiliative attachment, this

research suggests that gratitude provides enabling conditions for employees to foster a deep bond with the organization associated with psychological ownership.

Finally, by introducing individuals' future work self-salience as a pivotal boundary condition that impacts the association between OSD and gratitude toward the organization, this work actively responds to calls from gratitude scholars' suggestion that individual differences should be considered when examining the gratitude emergence process (Locklear et al., 2022). Therefore, this research further promotes a more profound understanding of when employees' gratitude occurs. From this perspective, this research provides a means through which organizations can enhance employees' attachment by examining factors that positively relate to employees' gratitude toward the organization.

Figure 1. Research Model



2. Theoretical Background and Hypotheses Development

2.1. Literature Review

2.1.1. Gratitude in Organizations

Gratitude, one of the discrete emotions, is evoked when one becomes the recipient of supportive or helpful treatment from others (McCullough et al., 2001). However, being provided with benefits does not automatically elicit gratitude. According to gratitude literature, individuals' interpretations of received benefits play a pivotal role in gratitude emergence. Specifically, gratitude is heightened when the received benefit is directly relevant and perceived as valuable to beneficiaries (Haidt, 2003). In addition, when the benefit is voluntarily given and seen as costly to the benefactor, beneficiaries are more inclined to feel grateful (MacKenzie et al., 2014; McCullough et al., 2001). Although extant research mostly examined gratitude in interpersonal relationships, several research has confirmed that individuals can also experience gratitude for non-human entities such as a nation and the government (Lambert et al., 2009; Palmatier et al., 2009; Eibach et al., 2015). Moreover, prior research has demonstrated that employees regard organizations to have human-like entities (Waytz & Young, 2012) and use a similar attribution process used in interpersonal relationships (Bridger & Wood, 2017; Soscia, 2007). In this regard, employees can also develop gratitude toward the organization they are employed.

Gratitude in the organizational context can be categorized into three categories: (1) episodic gratitude, (2) persistent gratitude (3) collective gratitude (Fehr et al., 2017). Firstly, episodic gratitude (or state gratitude) refers to gratitude arising from the event level (Gibson & Callister, 2010). An episodic level of gratitude lasts for a short period of time resulting from a particular event (Elfenbein, 2008). Gratitude at this level is unstable and can fluctuate over time. Secondly, persistent gratitude pertains to an individual's long-lasting inclination to experience feelings of gratitude consistently within a specific situation or context (Ferh et al., 2017). Employees' accumulated experiences of episodic gratitude can give rise to persistent gratitude (Ford et al., 2018). Lastly, collective gratitude is a shared perception of persistent gratitude expressed by members of an organization (Ferh et al., 2017). All three types of gratitude influence each other (Ferh et al., 2017; Chen et al., 2022), thus understanding three-level of gratitude in the organization is crucial to grasp the complex concept of gratitude at work.

2.1.2. Antecedents of gratitude in organizations

A review of antecedents of gratitude in organizations indicates that gratitude emerges not only when employees have been provided with positive benefits but also when pardoned from negative outcomes. According to affective event theory (AET), employees' appraisal of affective events at work' is a crucial determinant of their job attitudes and behaviors (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). This theory is mainly used to explain gratitude emergence at event levels, which mostly consist of interpersonal interaction in the organization. Receiving positive support from supervisors can be an essential

driver of subordinates' gratitude toward their leader. For example, a diary study by Li et al. (2022) has demonstrated that receiving coaching from supervisors gave rise to subordinates' increased gratitude toward the supervisor. Getting praise from one's leader also contributes to the emergence of gratitude for one's leader (Jiang & Qu, 2022). Gratitude is also inspired when expected negative consequences were prevented. In this regard, Lu et al. (2021) discovered that a leader's forgiveness regarding subordinates' errors or mistakes is related to subordinates' gratitude. Organizational support theory assumes that employees foster an overall perception of their company's appreciation for their input and prioritization of their wellness (Eisenberger et al., 1986). This theory is more suitable to explain antecedents of persistent gratitude in that it focuses on employees' accumulated experiences within the organization. In alignment with this theory, Ford et al. (2018) discovered that perceived organizational support gave rise to workers' chronic gratitude. Moreover, Chen et al. (2020) revealed that an error management climate is also shown to foster employees' gratitude at work, as it creates an environment where employees are not blamed for errors they made and are encouraged to learn from mistakes.

Despite increasing interest in gratitude at the workplace, previous gratitude research mostly focused on interactions between organizational members such as supervisors and coworkers at the event level. However, this may limit our understanding of gratitude in organizations, thus creating a need for finding novel antecedents that contribute to employees' positive or negative experiences within the organization. Therefore, it would be meaningful to investigate factors that influence employees' gratitude toward the organization,

as employees may like people or their jobs, but dislike the organization they are working for. Moreover, although some research has explored individual characteristics-based moderators that can impact individuals' gratitude levels (Li et al., 2022; Sun et al., 2019), most of the studies did not conduct empirical examinations regarding the impact of individual differences. As mentioned earlier, individuals' interpretations of the received benefits play a crucial role in determining the level of gratitude (Ferh et al., 2017). Failure to take into account those boundary factors may create a dark spot in the literature.

This research aims to shed light on gratitude in organizations and provide additional insights. Organizational support for development (OSD), which is an indicator of opportunities for development in the organization, is relevant for enhancing understanding of how gratitude is elicited. Given the crucial role of developmental support in shaping employees' perception of the organization they are working for, OSD can be a particularly salient factor for evoking gratitude. Moreover, OSD also reflects employees' overall perception of developmental support within the organization, which is shaped by the employees' involvement in formal developmental opportunities and developmental relationships during employment (Kraimer et al., 2011). As OSD denotes employees' perceptions which require some time to develop, I focus on the emergence of persistent gratitude in this research.

2.2. Hypotheses Development

2.2.1. Affect Theory of Social Exchange (ATSE)

Exchange theories have been widely used to explicate employee and organization relationships, positing that employees and employers engage in

economic or social exchange relationships (Blau, 1964). When one party receives something valuable from the other party, the former is motivated to reciprocate to the latter. Although social exchange theory offers a useful theoretical framework that can explicate how beneficial HR practices can elicit positive employee outcomes grounded on the norm of reciprocity (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), it failed to account for the role of emotions which serve as a key element in the exchange process. To complement these shortcomings, Lawler's (2001) affect theory of social exchange (ATSE) emphasizes the role of emotions stemming from social exchange in shaping attachment to relations, groups, or networks. ATSE focuses on how and when emotional responses arise from the exchange relationship. When exchange results are rewarding, global positive feelings arise whereas negative outcomes breed negative feelings. Subsequently, individuals make cognitive efforts to comprehend the origins or reasons behind these feelings, and this attribution process produces specific emotions directed toward the exchange partner (Lawler et al., 2008). Following this logic, to the extent that exchanges with the organization elicit employees' positive feelings about the organization, employees will develop gratitude toward the organization. Moreover, gratitude directed at the exchange partner fosters a strong attachment motive. Subsequently, employees' gratitude will lead employees to assess their organization more positively, motivating them to engage in greater exchanges and develop deeper bonds with the organization. Therefore, the affect theory of social exchange is particularly useful for understanding antecedents and consequences of gratitude toward the organization. In this regard, by providing

developmental support to employees, the organization embarks on social exchange with its employees, eliciting emotional responses from them.

2.2.2. Organizational Support for Development (OSD) and Gratitude toward the Organization

Organizational support for development (OSD) refers to employees' subjective perception that their organizations fulfill their developmental needs (Kuvaas, 2008). High OSD indicates a positive work environment that offers ample chances for sharing information, developing resources, providing rewards, and engaging employees in challenging job tasks that promote their career growth (Kraimer et al., 2011; Kurtessis et al., 2017). By offering developmental support, the organization engages in an exchange relationship with employees. In accordance with the affect theory of social exchange (Lawler, 2001), I expect that OSD can contribute to employees' development of gratitude toward the organization as OSD provides benefits for the employees and promotes employees' positive work experiences, thereby eliciting employees' positive assessment of exchange relationship with the organization.

Findings from prior research on literature have largely confirmed the positive effect of developmental support on employees. OSD is viewed as a beneficial and supportive situational factor that aids employees in enhancing their human capital and attaining career progression (Maurer & Chapman, 2013). As an essential facilitator of employees' career success (Allen et al., 2003), developmental support is closely linked to employees' feeling valued in the organization (Wayne et al., 1997; Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009). Moreover, developmental support can significantly improve employees' subjective job

security (Kohlrausch & Rasner, 2014) and reduce change-related anxiety (Fletcher et al., 2018), as they believe that employability is cared for by the organization (Lee & Bruvold, 2003). Therefore, sufficient OSD can contribute to employees' positive work experiences within the organization. In contrast, when OSD is low, employees will be pressured to navigate their careers without any meaningful external assistance, leading them to expend valuable individual resources to achieve career goals (Han & Hwang, 2023). Moreover, when OSD is not sufficiently provided, employees may waste their time and resources on activities that provide relatively low returns (Shah et al., 2002). Thus, a lack or dearth of OSD may cultivate employees' negative evaluations of the organization they are working for.

More broadly, studies have also found that OSD can enhance employees' perception regarding their own skills and abilities (Robins et al.,2002; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990; Spell et al., 2014) and organization-based self-esteem (Gardner et al., 2021). According to Frenkel and Bednall (2016), developmental support significantly enhanced employees' positive career expectations within the organization. As OSD brings positive career outcomes for the employees, employees are inclined to consider their exchange with the organization as rewarding (Lawler, 2001). Therefore, OSD will be associated with the development of positive feelings directed at the organization, and those accumulated experiences can contribute to employees' positive evaluation of the exchange relationship with the organization. As organizations can cultivate encouraging work settings by providing developmental support, employees are inclined to associate positive experiences with the actions of their organization (Landsman, 2008; Mignonac & Richebe, 2013), leading employees to develop

gratitude toward the organization. Therefore, my theoretical argument posits that OSD positively relates to employees' favorable experiences within the organization and those experiences give rise to employees' gratitude toward the organization.

In addition, according to gratitude literature, gratitude is heightened when the benefit is given intentionally by the benefactor (Weinstein et al., 2010). In this regard, OSD is considered a discretionary HRM practice that is non-mandatory and is not subject to external regulation (Gavino et al., 2012). As OSD is not compulsory, employees are more inclined to experience gratitude toward the organization when provided with developmental support. Moreover, OSD is a rather future-focused investment that incurs significant costs for the organization such as financial costs and efforts (Kraimer et al.,2011). Indeed, investing in employees' developmental support create a significant risk for the organization, as the organization may not reap the benefits of its investment due to employee turnover or unexpectedly low yields. Due to the risks associated with providing OSD, employees are more prone to perceive the benevolent intentions of their organizations when given OSD. In this regard, employees are inclined to acknowledge the organization for their favorable experiences and would feel gratitude toward the organization when they perceive high OSD. Hence, I predict that:

Hypothesis 1: Organizational support for development (OSD) has a significant positive impact on employees' gratitude toward the organization.

2.2.3. The Role of Future Work Self-Salience (FWSS) as a Moderator

According to gratitude literature, the emergence of gratitude can be influenced by moderating factors that influence the recognition of benefits (Ferh et al., 2017; Li et al., 2021). In order to feel grateful toward the organization for OSD, employees should be able to recognize the benefits they have received from the organization. Although OSD is intended to enhance employees' knowledge and skills for their current or future jobs (Mondy & Noe, 2005), prior studies have indicated that the positive effect of OSD is contingent upon individual differences. For example, Maurer and Lippstreu (2008) argued that development support does not lead to greater commitment for those with low learning orientation. In addition, Wilson and Chaudhry (2017) discovered that developmental support is linked to high turnover for employees with a high-power distance orientation. These arguments align with HR research, which has found that positive HR approaches do not always elicit positive responses from employees and can sometimes be regarded as a burden. In line with this argument, I posit that certain factors can make employees more or less attentive to the potential benefits of OSD, thus influencing the level of gratitude toward the organization.

Specifically, I expect that employees' recognition of OSD's benefits depends on whether one has clear future career goals. According to goal facilitation theory, individuals with important goals are attracted to the social environments that are perceived as instrumental in realizing their goals, leading them to develop a more positive evaluation of the surrounding environment (Fitzsimons & Shah, 2008; Cardador et al., 2011). Following this logic,

individuals with important career goals would be more sensitive as to whether their work environment can facilitate their goals. In this respect, although OSD provides crucial work resources that can enhance employees' KSOs and future performance (Kraimer et al., 2011), the benefits of OSD will be more salient among employees with clear future career goals.

Consistent with this prior research, I posit that employees' differences in future work self-salience (FWSS) would be a theoretically relevant boundary condition that can determine gratitude toward the organization in response to OSD. This is because higher FWSS leads employees to focus more on the potential advantages of OSD. FWSS denotes the level at which employees perceive their visions and objectives for their future work as distinct and consistently accessible within their self-concept system or identities (Strauss et al., 2012). Prior research has indicated that employees with high FWSS are prompted to go beyond immediate needs and actively pursue activities that can broaden their future opportunities (Strauss & Kelly, 2016). As a result, individuals with high FWSS are more inclined to set career goals that align with their envisioned future selves, in contrast to those with low FWSS (Strauss et al., 2012). Moreover, FWSS functions as a powerful motivator that inspires individuals to process information and exert self-control in a way that can facilitate their career goal achievement (Guan et al., 2017; Strauss et al., 2012). Indeed, individuals with future-oriented identities have the capacity to detect discrepancies between their envisioned future and present circumstances (Atance & O'Neill, 2001; He et al., 2022), making individuals develop deeper apprehension of how their current behaviors or situations can be linked to the ideal future state. Therefore, in line with goal facilitation theory (Fitzsimons &

Shah, 2008), FWSS can heighten employees' awareness of organizational context as to whether it can aid their future goal pursuit. For example, Yu et al., (2016) have noted that FWSS increases employees' sensitivity regarding working conditions which may affect the fulfillment of future career goals. Since workers with high FWSS are more likely to develop clear and accessible goals in their minds, they are more likely to be attentive to the possible benefits of organizational context. In contrast, those individuals with low FWSS tend to narrow their attention to practical necessities and display minimal curiosity in expanding their perspectives concerning future possibilities (Strauss et al., 2012). Thus, employees with low FWSS may have a less distinct understanding of how the current organizational context can benefit them in the long run. In conclusion, individuals exhibiting high FWSS will demonstrate a more distinct comprehension of the influence of the organizational context in contrast to those with low FWSS.

Accordingly, when provided with a positive working condition such as OSD, employees who possess high FWSS are more inclined to form positive assessments of their organization. This positive evaluation of the organization will contribute to employees' favorable judgment of the exchange relationship with the organization, which can also increase the frequency of employees' positive experiences within the organization. Moreover, as developmental support is an investment that is oriented toward enhancing employees' future performance (Gavino et al., 2012), employees with high FWSS would have a better understanding of how OSD can benefit their future careers and perceive higher instrumentality for OSD, creating a conducive context for gratitude emergence. When receiving help or support from others, whether the received

benefit is perceived to be instrumental in one's goal attainment is a crucial factor in determining the level of gratitude (Converse & Fishbach, 2012). Hence, when employees possessing high FWSS receive OSD, they may be inclined to perceive OSD as valuable support. Therefore, individuals with high FWSS are more prone to develop a keener understanding of how OSD can benefit their future goals, leading to higher gratitude toward the organization. On the contrary, employees with low FWSS are less apt to develop a clear mental picture of desired career goals and tend to demonstrate a poorer understanding of how their current working conditions are linked to their future careers (Yu et al., 2016). Employees with low FWSS may perceive future-focused developmental support as inconsequential, leading them to diminish the perceived significance of OSD (He et al., 2022). Thus, employees with low FWSS will be less likely to appreciate how OSD can benefit their future careers, leading to lower gratitude toward the organization compared to those with high FWSS. Therefore, I predict the following:

Hypothesis 2: Future work self-salience (FWSS) moderates the positive impact of OSD on gratitude toward the organization. The higher the level of FWSS, the stronger the effect of OSD on gratitude toward the organization

2.2.4. Consequence of Gratitude in Organizations

Gratitude is associated with a positive outcome in terms of three categories: 1) prosocial behaviors 2) performance 3) well-being. Firstly, gratitude relates to prosocial behaviors at work. Indeed, gratitude also encourages prosocial behaviors toward those who are not direct benefactors as

well. For instance, the close relationship between gratitude and organizational citizenship behaviors has empirically been proven in several research (Spence et al., 2013; Ford et al., 2018; Chen et al., 2020). Secondly, gratitude at work enhances employees' performance at work. According to social exchange theory, gratitude creates positive reciprocity that motivates individuals to repay the benefactor (Blau, 1964; Baker & Bulkley, 2014). Consistent with this argument, gratitude at work reduces turnover intention (Ng, 2016) and improves employees' job performance in the organization (Cortini et al., 2019). Based on broaden-and-build theory, gratitude expands the scope of individuals' thought-action repertories and contributes to building personal resources (Fredrickson, 2001). Hence, employees are more likely to generate creative ideas (Chen et al., 2020; Pillay et al., 2020). Thirdly, previous studies have demonstrated that gratitude positively impacts employees' wellness at work (Emmons et al., 2003; Cameron et al., 2004). In fact, gratitude encourages individuals to focus on what they already have and reduces negative emotions such as envy and rancor (Emmons et al., 2003). Moreover, gratitude at the workplace reduces materialism which refers to employees' strong aspiration for money, fame or image (Unanue et al., 2021).

2.2.5. Gratitude toward the Organization Leads to Psychological Ownership

Organization-based psychological ownership is a special form of organizational attachment that reflects employees' "It's mine" belief about the organization (Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004; Avey et al., 2008). Employees' psychological ownership can arise regardless of actual legal ownership of the

organization (Wilpert, 1991). When employees develop a feeling of ownership, it leads employees to perceive their organization as a vital aspect of who they are (Dittmar, 1992). Prior research has demonstrated that psychological ownership creates a deep bond that can promote employees' positive work behaviors in the organization (Van Dyne & Pierce, 2004). According to psychological ownership theory (Pierce et al., 2001, 2003), workers are able to cultivate psychological ownership via three avenues: exerting control over the target, possessing a deeper comprehension or greater familiarity with the target, and fully engaging or immersing oneself in the target. However, as these three routes are complementary and can add to others, ownership can emerge from any individual route or a combination of these routes (Pierce et al., 2003).

I expect that gratitude toward the organization relates to the development of psychological ownership. As predicted by the affect theory of social exchange (Lawler, 2001), emotions experienced as a result of social exchange can determine how individuals perceive their social exchange counterparts such that positive feelings lead to stronger affiliative attachment and promote an increased exchange of valuable resources (Lawler et al., 2014). As gratitude toward the organization heightens awareness of positive qualities and benefits one has received from the organization, employees are more prone to deepen their bond with the organization. In the process of psychological ownership development, favorable judgments about the target are crucial in developing a possessive feeling toward the target (Pierce et al., 2003). If one does not perceive the attractiveness of the target, it will be difficult to cultivate psychological ownership. I argue that gratitude toward the organization can boost employees' positive evaluation of the organizational context. Studies have

found that gratitude is strongly associated with psychological attachment to the benefactor (Algoe et al., 2013; Williams & Bartlett, 2015) and makes individuals focus more on the positive qualities of the benefactor (Watkins et al., 2006; Algoe & Haidt, 2009). As such, gratitude directed at the organization will be associated with employees' positive appraisal of organizational affairs, and they are more likely to derive positive meaning from their work and organization (Zhang et al., 2021). Further, gratitude toward the organization is likely to be associated with employees' satisfaction in employer-employee relations (Algoe et al., 2010), making them perceive their organization as an attractive place to work. Therefore, I expect employees who are grateful for their organization are more likely to develop psychological ownership.

As mentioned earlier, employees' investment in the organization can make the organization a salient representation of employees' self-concept, leading to psychological ownership (Chi & Han, 2008). Employees' investment in the organization can take many forms such as investing one's time, energy, or skills in organizational affairs (Chi & Han, 2008). I expect that gratitude toward the organization will promote employees' investment in the organization. In line with ATSE, as gratitude toward the organization promotes a strong attachment to the organization and facilitates positive expectations regarding the outcomes of future exchange at work (Lawler, 2008), employees would be more inclined to invest themselves in the organization to reciprocate. However, studies have revealed that gratitude goes beyond mere positive reciprocity. Unlike indebtedness, which focuses on restoring inequity in an exchange relationship, gratitude is oriented toward building relationships with the benefactor (Peng et al., 2018). In fact, gratitude at work fosters communal

exchange norms in the workplace (Fehr et al., 2017). Communal exchange norms are characterized by addressing others' needs regardless of anticipating specific returns or immediate reciprocity (Clark & Mills, 1979). Gratitude is strongly associated with responding to the needs of the benefactor (Algoe, 2012), which is a key feature of communal exchange norms. Under communal exchange norms, employees will be less concerned as to whether their investment can be reciprocated in the organization. Thus, grateful employees will be less sensitive to possible opportunity costs generated by investing in a particular target and will be motivated to build a positive relationship with the organization. Moreover, gratitude plays a critical role in eliminating uncertainties in future exchange relationships (Bartlett et al., 2012), enabling employees to invest themselves in the organization. Because of gratitude's role in influencing exchange norms in the organization, grateful employees will be prompted to invest themselves in the organization that exceeds quid pro quo.

In addition, gratitude toward the organization will make employees adopt the organization's goals. Jia et al. (2014) argued that gratitude promotes goal contagion such that employees who feel grateful toward the organization are more prone to believe that organizational goals are also important to themselves as well. As such, gratitude toward the organization, being a motivator for employees to act in favor of the organization, will be linked to employees' investment in the organization. Moreover, as gratitude toward the organization promotes employees' investment, it can also lead to employees' acquirement of organizational knowledge. Therefore, employees would better comprehend one's goals and contributions, leading them to develop a feeling of familiarity with their job and the organization. For these aforementioned

reasons, I believe that gratitude toward the organization will foster employees' psychological ownership. Thus, I propose the third hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: Gratitude toward the organization has a significant positive impact on employees' organization-based psychological ownership.

As Lawler (2001) argued in ATSE, emotions derived from social exchange plays a vital role in shaping future interactions and affiliation with the exchange partner. Thus, employees' emotions would function as a proximal outcome that can link the OSD and psychological ownership. Accordingly, I propose that gratitude toward the organization function as a more proximal result of OSD and serves as a mediator linking OSD and organization-based psychological ownership.

Hypothesis 4: Gratitude toward the organization mediates the relationship between OSD and organization-based psychological ownership.

Based on hypotheses 1-4, I also suggest that FWSS function as a moderator in the indirect relationship between OSD and organization-based psychological ownership. Therefore, I propose the following:

Hypothesis 5: Future work self-salience (FWSS) moderates the indirect positive impact of OSD on organization-based psychological ownership. The higher the level of FWSS, the stronger the indirect effect of OSD on organization-based psychological ownership.

3. Methods

3.1. Samples and Procedure

Participants for the study were sourced from Amazon's Mechanical Turk (Mturk) platform using Cloud research (Litman et al., 2017). To take part in the study, participants should be employed at organizations in the US with more than 10 employees and who have been employed by the current organization for a duration of one year or more. To mitigate the common method variance (CMV) problem (Podsakoff et al., 2003), data collection was conducted in a multi-wave fashion. At time 1, respondents answered questions on control variables, organizational support for development (OSD), and future work-self salience (FWSS). At time 2, 10 days after time 1, participants' responses on gratitude toward the organization were collected. At time 3, 7 days after time 2, I asked about organization-based psychological ownership. Although this time lag may not seem long enough, this interval has been utilized in several research and is effective in reducing CMV (Ford et al., 2018; Li et al., 2022). Prior to responding to survey inquiries, participants were asked to complete informed consent forms and were informed that there are no correct or incorrect answers. In addition, to guarantee a high-quality response, attention check items were added as well. Therefore, responses from participants who successfully fulfilled the requirement of all three surveys and completed the attention check items were considered for the final analysis. After excluding incomplete and missing answers, the final sample comprised 133 employees from the US. Across the entire sample, 61.2% were male and the rest were female. The average age of the respondents was 39.75 years (SD=8.77), and the mean organizational tenure was 8.07 years (SD=5.75). Most participants (75.9%) held at least a bachelor's degree with a variety of industry backgrounds. 17.2% were working in information technology, 15.7% in manufacturing, 14.2% in education, 13.4% in health care, 7.5% in finance, 5.2% in government and

19.4% in others. The participants received $ 1.3 in total as a reward for participation.

3.2. Measures

Since all the participants are from the US and their native language is English, I used the original measure written in English. All study variables were assessed using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 represented "strongly disagree" and 5 indicated "strongly agree."

Organizational support for development (OSD) (Time 1) The 6-item measure from Kraimer et al. (2011) was used to evaluate participants' perception of OSD. A sample item was ‘‘My organization has programs and policies that help employees to advance in their functional specialization.” (Cronbach's α = 0.947)

Future Work Self-Salience (Time 1) I assessed employees' FWSS with the 5-item measure from Strauss et al. (2012). Adhering to Strauss et al.'s (2012) approach, participants were directed to engage in a mental exercise of envisioning the ideal future version of their work self. Sample items were“I can easily imagine my Future Work Self.” and “I am very clear about who and what I want to become in my future work.” (Cronbach's α = 0.945)

Gratitude toward the organization (Time 2) Participants' Gratitude toward the organization was measured using the 6-item measure from Ng (2016) which modified McCullough et al. (2002)'s generalized gratitude scale. Sample items include “I am grateful to this organization for many reasons” and “If I had to list

every reason why I felt grateful to this organization, it would be a long list". (Cronbach's α = 0.935)

Organization-based Psychological Ownership (Time 3) Participants' organization-based psychological ownership was assessed using the 7-item measure from Van Dyne and Pierce (2004). Examples include "This is MY organization." and "I sense that this organization is OUR company." (Cronbach's α = 0.834)

Control Variables Participants' Gender (Male=0, Female=1), age, education (1= High school diploma or GED, 2= associate degree, 3= Bachelor's degree, 4= Master's degree, 5= Doctorate) and organizational tenure (years) were used as control variables for this study.

4. Results

4.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted utilizing the package 'lavaan' in R 4.0.5 (Rosseel, 2012) to evaluate the discriminant validity of variables. I conducted a comparison between a hypothesized four-factor model with several other models. In the proposed four-factor model, four key variables (OSD, FWSS, gratitude toward the organization, and organization-based psychological ownership) were regarded as independent factors. The model with three-factor treated OSD and gratitude towards the organization as one composite factor. The two-factor model combined OSD, gratitude toward the organization, and FWSS into a single factor. In the one-factor model, all

variables were integrated into one composite factor. As indicated in Table 1, supporting the distinctiveness of the measures, the findings demonstrated that the proposed model reasonably fit the data (CFI=0.922, TLI=0.912, RMSEA=0.089). Moreover, the outcome of a Harmon single-factor test revealed that all items constrained to a single factor explained 48.8 percent of common variance. As concerns for CMV are raised when the single factor representing CMV explains more than 50 percent of the variance, CMV is not an issue in this study.

4.2. Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 provides the results of descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation for all variables. OSD is not significantly related to control variables such as age, education, and organizational tenure. However, gender indicated a significant negative association with OSD ($r = -0.22$, $p<0.001$). The rest of the variables did not demonstrate a significant relationship with control variables.

Table 1. Model Fit Indices

Model	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA [90% CI]
Four-factor model[a]	504.662	246	2.05	0.922	0.912	0.089 [0.078, 0.1]
Three-factor model[b]	1040.919	249	4.18	0.760	0.734	0.155 [0.145, 0.164]
Two-factor model[c]	1474.104	251	5.87	0.629	0.592	0.191 [0.182, 0.201]
One-factor model[d]	1909.383	252	7.49	0.504	0.457	0.221 [0.212, 0.230]

N = 133
χ^2, chi-square statistic; CFI, comparative fit index; TLI, Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA, root mean square error of approximation
[a] OSD, GTO, FWSS, PO
[b] OSD+ GTO, FWSS, PO
[c] OSD+ GTO+ FWSS, PO
[d] OSD+ GTO+ FWSS+ PO
OSD = Organizational Support for Development, FWSS= Future Work Self-Salience, GTO= Gratitude toward the organization, PO= psychological ownership

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Gender	0.39	0.49	-						
2. Age	39.75	8.77	0.00	-					
3. Education	2.99	0.98	0.03	0.12	-				
4. Organizational Tenure	8.07	5.75	−0.15	0.39**	0.16	-			
5. OSD	3.6	1.04	−0.22**	−0.11	−0.02	−0.05	-		
6. FWSS	3.62	1.04	0.00	−0.01	0.06	0.08	0.43**	-	
7. GTO	3.67	0.99	−0.06	−0.06	−0.06	0.02	0.52**	0.48**	-
8. PO	3.03	0.94	0.03	0.01	0.08	0.04	0.45**	0.38**	0.68**

N=133, *p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Gender was coded as 0= male, 1= female,

Education is coded as 1=High school diploma or GED 2= Associate Degree, 3=Bachelor's Degree 4= Master's Degree, 5= Doctorate,

OSD = Organizational Support for Development, FWSS= Future Work Self-Salience, GTO= Gratitude toward the organization, PO= psychological ownership

Table 3. Regression Analysis

	Gratitude toward the Organization				Psychological Ownership			
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B	SE	*B*	SE	*B*	SE	*B*	SE
Intercept	1.97	0.52	1.22	0.52	0.90	0.50	−0.22	0.43
Gender	0.14	0.16	0.09	0.15	0.28	0.16	0.20	0.13
Age	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.01
Education	−0.07	0.09	−0.09	0.08	0.08	0.09	0.12	0.07
Organizational Tenure	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01
OSD	0.51***	0.07	0.38***	0.08	0.44***	0.07	0.15*	0.07
GTO							0.58***	0.07
FWSS			0.35***	0.08				
OSD × FWSS			0.13*	0.06				
F	9.77 ***		10.82 ***		7.55***		20.85***	
R^2	0.28		0.38		0.23		0.50	

N=133, *p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001
OSD = Organizational Support for Development, FWSS= Future Work Self-Salience,
GTO= Gratitude toward the organization, PO= psychological ownership

4.3. Hypothesis Tests

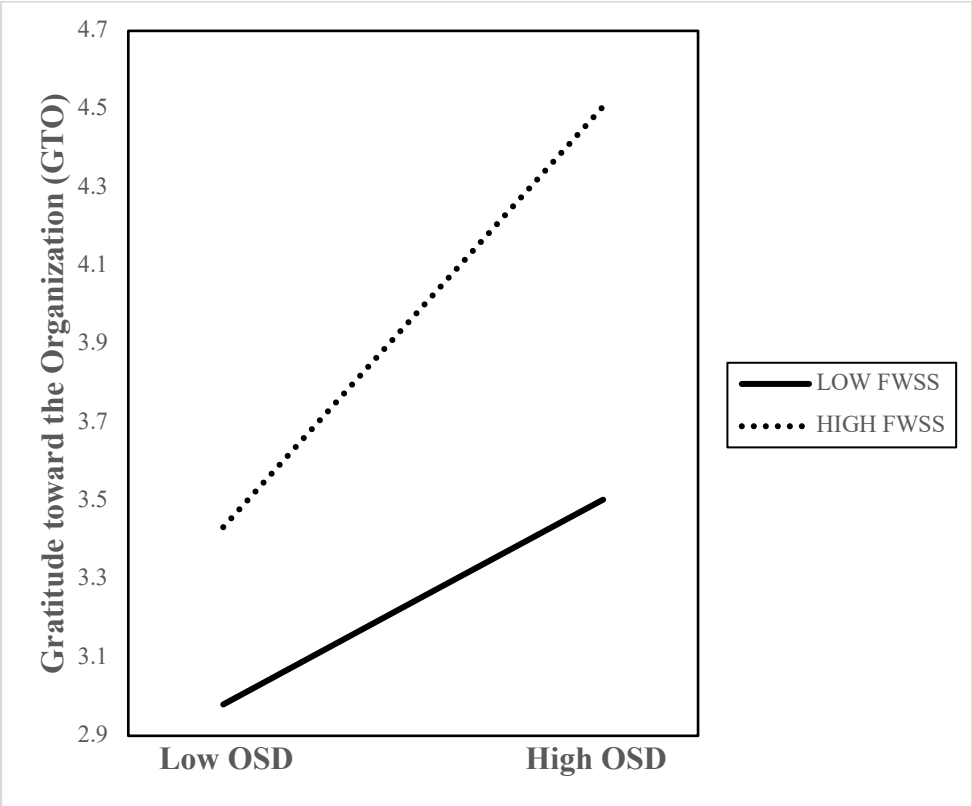
All hypotheses were tested using SPSS 23.0 and PROCESS macro (Model 4 and 7, Hayes et al., 2017). Table 3 represents the result of the hierarchical regression analysis which tests the relationships between OSD, gratitude toward the organization and psychological ownership. Hypothesis 1 suggested that OSD is positively linked to employees' gratitude toward the organization. As evident in model 1, the results revealed that OSD has a significant positive association with employees' gratitude toward the organization (β = 0.51, se=0.07 p <0.001). Thus, I conclude that hypothesis 1 received support.

Hypothesis 2 proposed that FWSS positively moderates the relationship between OSD and gratitude toward the organization. The interaction between OSD and FWSS significantly influences gratitude toward the organization (β = 0.13, se=0.06, p <0.05). As shown in Figure 2, the relationship between OSD and gratitude toward the organization is stronger when FWSS is high. The outcomes of the simple slope test show that the relationship between OSD and gratitude toward the organization was significant for both employees who had high FWSS (1 SD above the mean) (β = 0.51, t = 4.90, p < 0.01) and low FWSS (1 SD below the mean) (β = 0.25, t = 2.59, p < 0.05) but the effect was more pronounced for employees with high FWSS. Hence, this result provides support for hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 3 expects that gratitude toward the organization is positively influences organization-based psychological ownership. As indicated in model 3, gratitude toward the organization is positively linked to psychological

ownership (β = 0.58, se=0.07, p <0.001). The finding aligns with the predictions of Hypothesis 3.

Figure 2.
Interaction of OSD and FWSS on Gratitude toward the Organization



Next, I tested the mediation using process MACRO model 4. I utilized a bootstrapping method, producing 5,000 samples to form a 95% confidence interval (CI). 5,000 resampling was used in other studies and proven to be effective in assessing the mediation effect (Lange et al., 2019; Montgomery et al., 2020). The indirect effect of OSD on psychological ownership through gratitude toward the organization was statistically significant because the confidence interval (CI) did not encompass 0 (β=0.30, SE=0.05, CI= [0.20, 0.40], providing support for hypothesis 4. However, OSD also had a direct influence on psychological ownership (β=0.15, SE=0.07, CI= [0.01, 0.28]). Thus, there is

partial mediation by gratitude toward the organization in the relationship between OSD and psychological ownership.

Table 4. The Result of Moderated Mediation

Level of FWSS	Estimate (SE)	95% CI
-1 SD	0.15 (0.07)	[0.02, 0.31]
Mean	0.22 (0.06)	[0.12, 0.34]
+ 1 SD	0.30 (0.07)	[0.18, 0.44]

Lastly, using 5,000 resamples with a bootstrapping technique, I applied model 7 from the PROCESS macro to examine moderated mediation. The conditional indirect effect of OSD on psychological ownership through gratitude toward the organization was not significant as the index of moderation included 0 (β = 0.07, SE=0.04, CI= [−0.01, 0.15]). Hence, hypothesis 5 did not receive support. Table 5 summarizes the result of the study.

Table 5. The Summary of Results

No.	Hypothesis	Result
H1	*Organizational support for development (OSD) has a significant positive impact on employees' gratitude toward the organization.*	Supported
H2	*Future work self-salience (FWSS) moderates the positive impact of OSD on gratitude toward the organization. The higher the level of FWSS, the stronger the effect of OSD on gratitude toward the organization.*	Supported
H3	*Gratitude toward the organization has a significant positive impact on employees' organization-based psychological ownership.*	Supported
H4	*Gratitude toward the organization mediates the relationship between OSD and organization-based psychological ownership.*	Supported
H5	*Future work self-salience (FWSS) moderates the indirect positive impact of OSD on organization-based psychological ownership. The higher the level of FWSS, the stronger the indirect effect of OSD on organization-based psychological ownership.*	Not Supported

5. Discussion

Drawing from the affect theory of social exchange theory, the present research delves into the antecedent and consequence of gratitude toward the organization. In summary, the findings based on a sample of 133 US employees reveal a positive influence of OSD (Organizational Support for Development) on gratitude toward the organization. Furthermore, gratitude toward the organization serves as a partial mediator in the link between OSD and organization-based psychological ownership. Moreover, FWSS significantly

moderates the relationship between OSD and gratitude toward the organization, such that workers with high FWSS are more likely to be grateful toward the organization for OSD. These discoveries provide multiple contributions to the literature on gratitude and psychological ownership.

5.1. Theoretical Implications

As the primary contribution of this work, I believe this work enriches our theoretical understanding of gratitude in the organization. Firstly, this study improves our understanding of which factors in the organization could elicit employees' gratitude at the workplace. Earlier studies on gratitude have conducted empirical investigations to examine the impacts of specific impacting factors (Ford et al., 2018; Sun et al., 2019). However, these studies primarily concentrated on individual-level antecedents such as specific work events, interchange with colleagues, and leadership behaviors (Li et al., 2022; Zhan et al., 2021; Spence et al., 2014), whereas studies on the effect of organizational factors like organizational support for development were overlooked. While interpersonal interactions (e.g., helpings or forgiveness) do play a crucial role in gratitude emergence, a sole focus on interpersonal factors may hinder getting a full picture of gratitude emergence in the organization. Moreover, considering the fact that employees personify and form social exchange relationships with the organization (Levinson, 1965), antecedents of organization-referenced gratitude should also be addressed to fully understand gratitude within an organizational context. In the conceptual paper by Ferh et al. (2017), developmental support from supervisors was propositioned as a predictor of episodic gratitude to supervisors, and it received empirical support

(Li et al., 2022). However, whether accumulated experiences of developmental support can elicit employees' more persistent form of gratitude toward the organization was not investigated. By extending previous research, I found that employees' perception of OSD can contribute to the accumulation of positive experiences in the organization, leading to higher gratitude toward the organization. Results suggest that the organization itself can serve as an object of employees' gratitude and supportive HR policies such as developmental support can be triggers for gratitude. The affect theory of social exchange provides a suitable framework for elucidating how OSD can positively influence gratitude towards the organization, as OSD contributes to employees' positive experiences within the organizational context. I used the affect theory of social exchange to argue that OSD can contribute to employees' positive evaluation of social exchange relationships with the organization. Rather than simply stating good treatment elicits the norm of reciprocity, this research highlights the role of emotions resulting from social exchange, thereby highlighting its process.

Secondly, the results from this research provide meaningful insights into the effects of gratitude toward the organization. Most of the gratitude research in OB literature focused on the outcomes of gratitude directed at the other individual. Surprisingly, limited studies have been conducted regarding the link between gratitude and organizational attachment, despite the crucial role organizational attachment plays in producing favorable outcomes within the organization. Based on the affect theory of social exchange, I have discovered that gratitude toward the organization plays a pivotal part in fostering employees' strong attachment to the organization they are working for in the form of psychological ownership. In doing so, this research also contributes to

extending the affect theory of social exchange (Lawler, 2001) as my research highlighted that gratitude toward the organization can function as an affective filter that leads employees to develop strong organization-based psychological ownership. Indeed, by accounting for the role of emotions resulting from social exchange, this study also provides a bigger picture of how gratitude can provide linkages between OSD and employees' attachment to the organization. Therefore, drawing upon the affect theory of social exchange, this study explored the connection between gratitude toward the organization and psychological ownership and suggests that gratitude towards the organization helps foster a strong sense of attachment among employees towards the organization, namely psychological ownership, which contributes to expanding our understanding of gratitude in the organizational settings and underscores its positive impact on organizational outcomes. However, I must note that gratitude toward the organization did not fully mediate the relationship between OSD and psychological ownership, indicating a partial mediation. Employees may sense a strong ownership toward the organization as involving in developmental HRM practices may provide more intimate knowledge about the organization they are working for, thus leading to psychological ownership (Pierce et al., 2001). Nevertheless, gratitude toward the organization remained a paramount factor in explaining the linkage between OSD and psychological ownership. Future research may seek other relevant mechanisms of this relationship.

Thirdly, this study also assesses how the individual difference, namely FWSS, influences the gratitude emergence process. Gratitude research has highlighted the significance of beneficiaries' interpretation in eliciting gratitude (Ferh et al., 2017). Specifically, this discovery suggests that gratitude is not

solely associated with receiving valuable outcomes from external sources but is also influenced by some individual factors, such as future work self-salience. Earlier studies have focused on external factors that may contribute to increasing employees' gratitude towards the organization (e.g., Ford et al., 2018). Nevertheless, these studies did not thoroughly investigate boundary conditions, particularly certain individual factors that influence the experience of gratitude in the workplace. In accordance with this argument, the simple give-and-take mechanism of social exchange may not be able to fully explain the emergence of gratitude in an organizational context. However, only a few studies (Sun et al., 2019; Li et al., 2022) have explored the impact of individual differences on gratitude emergence in the organization. I extend past works by integrating the affect theory of social exchange and goal facilitation theory and found support that those with high FWSS are more likely to be grateful for OSD. As the results imply, those individuals with a vivid mental image of their future work identity would believe that OSD is more useful in facilitating their future goals. Hence, favorable treatments and benefits may not be equally valued by employees. Thus, this research enhances our comprehension of the circumstances and conditions under which gratitude towards the organization develops within organizations, emphasizing the significance of contextual elements.

Lastly, this study also elucidates an improved understanding of OSD. Despite the positive intentions of OSD, it did not always lead to positive outcomes for the employees (Kraimer et al., 2011; Wilson et al., 2017). Just merely explaining the effect of OSD using the human capital or career motivation lens may fail to provide a comprehensive picture. However, as this

study explained the effect of OSD through emotional perspectives, it can broaden the understanding of OSD. This study suggests that the positive outcome of OSD may be contingent upon the emotional response it elicits.

5.2. Practical Implications

My research also offers meaningful insight for practice apart from theoretical implications. First, my paper demonstrates that employees' gratitude at the workplace plays a pivotal role in enhancing employees' attachment in the form of psychological ownership, which is greatly beneficial for both employees and organizations (Ng & Allen, 2018). Therefore, practitioners should strive to facilitate employees' grateful feelings toward the organization. Prior research has uncovered diverse ways to foster employees' gratitude at work. For example, introducing carefully designed gratitude intervention can increase employees' positive attitudes and behaviors at work (Locklear et al., 2020; Ferh et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2021). Moreover, managers can consider utilizing assessment tools that can select employees who are prone to feel more gratitude in the same situation. For instance, one can consider selecting employees who are high in trait gratitude (Locklear et al., 2022). In this way, the company can create a more sustainable work environment.

This study particularly highlighted the positive role of organizational support for development (OSD) in fostering employees' gratitude toward the organization. Thus, managers should bear in mind that experiences of receiving developmental support play a crucial role in developing gratitude toward the organization. Interestingly, the positive influence of OSD was stronger for individuals with high FWSS, who had a vivid mental representation of their

future career aspirations. Hence, managers should assess this aspect during the selection process. Moreover, managers can also focus on constructing employees' future work selves in the organization. For example, organizations can implement intervention programs that encourage employees to clarify future work goals and provide info sessions regarding possible future careers within the organization. Although FWSS has been long considered a stable trait, it is subject to variation over time (Caspi et al., 2005; Guo et al., 2022). For example, Guo et al. (2022) have discovered that leaders' future orientation played a key role in fostering subordinate's FWSS. Hence, leaders should try their best to inculcate employees' future visions within the organization so as to magnify the positive effects of OSD.

5.3. Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Despite the aforementioned contributions, this study has some limitations. Firstly, this research adopted a cross-sectional design, which cannot guarantee causality between variables and may bring up the problem of reverse causality. However, the affect theory of social exchange posits that social exchange is accompanied by emotions, which in turn influence affiliation with the social exchange partner (Lawler, 2001). Therefore, the causal order of study variables appears to be logical from a theoretical perspective. Future studies can replicate the findings of this study by utilizing a longitudinal or experimental study design. For example, one can manipulate the level of OSD using the scenario designs, and check whether it leads to significant differences in employees' response toward the organization.

Secondly, all the study variables in this research were based on self-reports. Using self-reports may incur problems such as reduced validity of results by inflating the correlation among the variables because of common method variance (CMV) (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Nevertheless, the temporal separation administered during the data-collection process can mitigate the concern for CMV (Podsakoff et al., 2003). In addition, participants were made aware that there are no correct or incorrect responses and were provided with assurance of confidentiality. This approach aims to reduce social desirability or consistency motive (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Moreover, the result of the Harmon one-factor test indicated that CMV is not a concern for this study, as the one-factor test indicated a very poor fit. However, future research can replicate this finding using a multi-source design to ensure that CMV did not meaningfully impact the results.

Lastly, the generalizability of results can also be a limitation of the study as the sample consists of workers solely from the U.S. Although the sample consisted of employees from diverse ethnic and industrial backgrounds, national differences such as cultural background, and economic situations, OSD may create different outcomes in different samples. For example, in a country where the labor market is rigid compared to a more flexible country, employees may have different views regarding certain HRM practices (Kizilos et al., 2013). Therefore, future research can replicate the finding using samples from different countries.

As for future ideas, researchers can probe different moderators that can influence the relationship between OSD and gratitude toward the organization. Firstly, future research can investigate other individual-level moderators. For

instance, other individual factors may enhance or decrease the personal relevance and usefulness of organizational support. Employees who believe they can navigate their careers independently may view OSD as unnecessary or not essential. For example, employees who perceive themselves to be overqualified for their current job felt less grateful for the coaching received (Li, et al., 2022). Moreover, employees who do have a low desire to improve themselves can regard OSD as a burden (Maurer & Lippstreu, 2008). Thus, the same support may elicit a different level of gratitude depending on individual differences.

In addition, future research can also probe the moderating role of gender. It is widely recognized that within the organization, career development opportunities are not evenly distributed based on gender, with women receiving fewer opportunities compared to men (Eby et al., 2005). Typically, women are regarded as lower in perceived competence than men (Cuddy et al., 2011). Thus, investing in women is considered to be a riskier option for the company. Moreover, women are more prone to encounter more adversities compared to men when aiming to reach the same level of success in the organization (Hoobler et al., 2014). Hence, women may require more developmental resources compared to men to reach the same level of success. These obstacles women face regarding developmental opportunities may bring different reactions to OSD received. For example, Women may value OSD more because they require additional resources to succeed in the organization. Or they may feel helpless, recognizing other barriers that can hamper their career success even with sufficient developmental support. These areas warrant additional research.

Moreover, a social context may send conflicting signals with developmental support. For example, when the performance climate was high, the positive effect of developmental support on employees was weakened as they sensed mixed signals. (Nerstad et al., 2018). In a similar vein, future research can probe whether employees' perceived organizational politics can influence OSD and employee outcome relationships. In a highly political environment, employees may sense that important organizational rewards are allotted by political decisions that deprioritize performance (Ferris et al., 2019). In this organizational setting, employees may feel indifferent or cynical toward the developmental support provided by the organization.

Lastly, future research can also examine the potential negative consequences of gratitude toward the organization. While a significant portion of gratitude literature has centered on the beneficial impact of gratitude in organizational environments, some research has also uncovered its potential downside (Lu et al., 2021). Due to a strong relationship maintenance motive of gratitude (Lu et al., 2021; Ferh et al., 2017), employees may be inclined to participate in unethical actions in pursuit of relationship maintenance with the organization. In addition, grateful employees may engage in compulsive overwork, which can diminish their well-being at work in the long run. Therefore, more multi-faceted and long-term observation of gratitude's aftermath is required in organizational research.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

The findings demonstrate that OSD is significantly and positively associated with gratitude toward the organization, which in turn stimulates

employees' organization-based psychological ownership. Therefore, the results indicate that gratitude towards the organization functions as a mediator in the relationship between OSD and organization-based psychological ownership. In addition, it also highlights the role of individual difference that serves as a boundary condition for gratitude emergence. The results imply that FWSS functions as a moderator in the link between OSD and gratitude toward the organization. Nevertheless, the moderated mediation of FWSS on the indirect connection between OSD and psychological ownership did not receive support. In sum, this research extends the theory on the factors leading to and results of workplace gratitude and also sheds light on individual differences in identities as a moderator that impacts employees' reactions to OSD.

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국 문 초 록

조직의 개발 지원과 심리적 주인의식
- 조직에 대한 감사의 역할을 중심으로 -

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경영학과 경영학 전공
이원준

직장에서의 감사 정서는 종업원과 조직 모두에게 이익을 가져올 수 있다. 그러나 현재까지 이루어진 감사 정서에 대한 연구는 조직 내의 대인관계에서 비롯된 감사를 위주로 이루어졌으며, 조직을 향한 감사(Gratitude toward the Organization)에 대한 연구는 충분치 못한 실정이다. 해당 연구는 사회 교환의 감정 이론과 목표 촉진 이론을 활용하여 조직에 대한 감사의 새로운 선행과 후행 요인을 탐색하였다. 이 연구는 3 차례의 설문 조사를 통해 수집한 근로자 133 명의 데이터를 활용하였다. SPSS 와 PROCESS Macro 를 사용하여 다중 회귀 분석, 매개 분석, 조절 분석 등의 통계분석이 이루어졌다. 분석결과에 따르면, 조직의 개발 지원(Organizational Support for Development)이 조직을 향한 감사에 정적인 영향을 미치며, 이는 종업원의 조직에 대한 심리적 주인의식(Psychological Ownership)으로 이어짐을 확인하였다. 한편, 종업원의 미래 자아 현저성(Future Work Self-Salience)은 조직 개발 지원이 조직에 대한 감사에 미치는 정적인 영향을 더욱 강화하는 것으로 나타났다. 이로부터 조직의 개발 지원과 같은 긍정적인 HR 제도 역시 감사 정서의 근원이 될 수 있으며, 종업원의 개인차 변인 역시 감사 정서 발현에 영향을 미칠 수 있음을 알 수 있었다. 끝으로, 본 연구의 의의는 조직 차원에서 종업원의 감사 정서에 대한 이해를 향상시키는 이론적인 그리고 실무적인 시사점을 제공한다는 점에서 찾아볼 수 있다.

키워드: 조직의 개발 지원, 조직에 대한 감사, 심리적 주인의식, 미래 업무 자아 현저성, 사회 교환의 감정 이론, 목표 촉진 이론

학번:2020-20804