

Impact of Perceived Organizational Support, Coworker Support and Organizational Politics on Employee Performance of Nursing Officers in Sri Lankan Hospitals

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Abstract

Performance and role of nurses are inevitable in Government hospitals in Sri Lanka. Nurses have been described as the backbone of the Sri Lankan healthcare system. There is a need to know how they are performing. There is prior literature that has focused its attention on perceived organizational support, coworker support, organizational politics and employee performance in different countries and different industries. There are very few studies in the Sri Lankan health sector that have created a research gap. This has been taken as an opportunity to know the employee performance of nurses in Government hospitals. This proposed study aims to investigate the influence of perceived organizational support, coworker support, and organizational politics on the performance of nursing officers in Sri Lankan Hospitals, with the support of hypotheses. A well-structured questionnaire was designed to collect data from 787 respondents using a cross-sectional survey during the period from 2022 to 2024. SPSS version 25.0 and SmartPLS 4.1 were used as tools for the study to facilitate data analysis. Data analyses were based on both direct reflective measurement and structural models. The reflective measurement model was assessed using indicator reliability, internal consistency checks, convergent validity, and divergent validity. The structural model was also assessed using path coefficient significance tests (t & p values), as well as quality criteria such as the explanatory power (R -squared) and predictive power (Q^2). It was found that perceived organizational support and organizational politics influence employee performance, whereas coworker support does not. The conclusion revealed that perceived organizational support and organizational politics influence nurses' performance in Sri Lankan Government hospitals. Since this study has established relationships between perceived organizational support and employee performance, and between organizational politics and employee performance, it will be helpful to policy makers in the Sri Lankan health sector and has practical implications.

Keywords: Perceived organizational support, coworker support, organizational politics, employee performance

Introduction

In Sri Lanka, government-sponsored health services are free and are delivered through an extensive network of health centers, hospitals, and dispensaries located countrywide, from primary to tertiary levels, reaching the majority of the community (Jayasekara & Schultz, 2007). The government sector provides healthcare for nearly 60% of the population, encompassing the entire range of preventive, curative, and rehabilitative healthcare provision (Govindaraj, Navaratne, Cavagnero & Seshadri, 2014).

Nurses are the “backbone” of any healthcare system, and their workload is multifaceted and very complex (De Alwis & Kumari, 2015). Therefore, as professional nurses play a crucial role in health care. Nurses are engaged with both the government and private sectors in Sri Lanka. Government sector nurses are employed in government hospitals, where they receive government-designated compensation schemes, standard salary scales, leave policies, facilities, and benefits in accordance with government regulations (Dayananda & Samarakoon, 2019). Health services provided by hospitals encompass promotive, preventive, curative, and rehabilitative services, which include inpatient, outpatient, and emergency care (Fikri, Wahyu, Naiem & Muis, 2024).

The quality of health services is heavily influenced by the performance of hospital human resources, including both medical and non-medical health workers (Watmanlussy, Razak, Darmawansyah, Arifin, Syafar, Daud & Nurhayani, 2020). Nurses are essential resources in hospitals as they spend more time with patients than any other healthcare personnel (Alsadaan, Salameh, Ahmed, Elsaid, Alruwaili, Alruwaili, Ahmed, Ali, Alruwaili, Hefnawy, Alshammari, Ghazi, Alrumayh, Alruwaili & Jones, 2023). Performance is defined as the record of outcomes produced on a specified job function or activity during a specified time period (Bernardin & Russell, 1998). Employee performance is a unique aspect because each employee possesses different abilities (Hermawan, Thamrin & Susilo, 2020). Stewart & Brown (2011) define employee job performance as the contribution that individuals make to the organization that employs them. Employee performance depends on the level of skills and abilities, effort, and opportunities available to them (Bagyo, 2018). Earlier, job performance was simply mentioned as the quantity and quality of the output of each employee working in an organization. But, in the present scenario, employees do much more than is traditionally included in their job descriptions (Ramawickrama, Opatha & PushpaKumari, 2017).

Need for the Study

This study aims to fill a literature gap in the areas of perceived organizational support (POS), coworker support (CWS), organizational politics (OP), and employee performance in the Sri Lankan context. Several studies have been conducted abroad. However, there are very few studies and limited literature on perceived organizational support (POS), coworker support (CWS), organizational politics (OP), and employee performance (EP) in the Sri Lankan context. Research studies have been conducted to investigate the direct relationships among these variables abroad. On this ground, this study adds to the understanding of the relationships among perceived organizational support, coworker support, organizational politics, and employee performance in Sri Lanka. This study has developed a model based on a direct relationship among perceived organizational support, coworker support, organizational politics, and employee performance. The factors within this model are useful for predicting employee performance in government hospitals. This study is expected to contribute to the health sector of Sri Lanka. To improve the performance of nurses, the roles of perceived organizational support, coworker support, and organizational politics on employee performance are examined.

Statement of the Problem

The human factor in healthcare is a key variable that can be managed to achieve significant improvements in the effectiveness of healthcare delivery (De Silva, 2019). The nursing staff is the largest personnel component in the public health sector in Sri Lanka and one of the largest components of the healthcare service population worldwide (Hellerawa & Adambarage, 2015). Given the importance of nurses, it is necessary to examine the factors that influence their performance in Government hospitals. Studies have shown that workload, professional support, training received, and working conditions are the main factors influencing job satisfaction among nurses in Sri Lanka (Imendra, Uduwilarachchi & Kumara, 2014). Accordingly, various factors can affect nurses' performance in Government hospitals.

As per studies, perceived organizational support in hospitals is not at a satisfactory level (Chamal & Dilina, 2018). Organizational politics either positively or negatively affect employee performance in

organizations. Albloush, Alharbi, Alghizzawi, Alabaddi, and Abu-Alsondos (2025) found that a negative relationship between perception of organizational politics and its effect on organizational performance. Coworker support in hospitals is essential for enhancing employee performance and satisfaction among healthcare professionals. Sridharan, Liyanage, and Wickramasinghe (2008) recommended that professional support plays a crucial role in determining the job satisfaction of nursing officers in Sri Lankan Government Hospitals. All these literatures suggest that there is a need to understand the impact of perceived organizational support, organizational politics and coworkers' support on the performance of nurses in Sri Lankan hospitals.

Although there are previous studies on perceived organizational support, coworker support, organizational politics, and employee performance, they differ in terms of period, country, and findings. This has been taken as a study gap for analyzing this proposed study in the Sri Lankan context during 2023 among nursing officers in Sri Lankan Hospitals. Thus, this proposed study aims to examine perceived organizational support, coworker support, and organizational politics on employee performance of nursing officers in Sri Lankan Hospitals.

Objectives of the Study

Objectives of this study are;

1. To examine the influence of perceived organizational support on employee performance.
2. To study the impact of coworker support on employee performance
3. To identify the influence of organizational politics on employee performance.

Literature Review

The literature review of this study focused on an empirical review based on previous findings. Empirical review of this study focuses on the relationship between (1) perceived organizational support and employee performance, (2) coworker support and employee performance and (3) organizational politics and employee performance.

Perceived Organizational Support and Employee Performance

An organization that treats its employees favorably will encourage the employees to dedicate themselves to the smooth functioning of the organization. Saks (2006) found that perceived organizational support (POS) was the only antecedent that significantly predicted both commitment to the job and the organization. The organization's contributions and facilitation for its employees have significant value to them (Javed & Tariq, 2015). Employees appreciate organizational support as an important practice. Fair treatment, a supportive environment and effective human resource policies can help develop organizational support in organizations. Perceived organizational support (POS) is created by employees' evaluations of how they are treated by their organization, and employees use their interpretation of perceived organizational support to determine their effort-reward (Dinç, 2015). Organizational support indicates how much the organization values its employees and cares about their well-being (Abed & Elewa, 2016).

Once reviewing the relationship between perceived organizational support and employee performance, there are contradictory previous findings. Mokhtar, Ambad, Annuar, and Lajuni (2020) found that perceived organizational support had a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Organizational support has positive implications for employees at all levels of management. Rubel and Kee (2013) found that both organizational and supervisory supports have a positive, significant relationship with employee engagement, which in turn is positively related to employee in-role performance. Alternatively, Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) meta-analysis exhibits a strong positive association between POS and job performance. Another study found that perceived organizational

support has a negative, insignificant effect on employee performance (Fetriah & Herminingsih, 2023). From the above literature review, the following set of null and alternative hypotheses was developed.

H₀₁ Null Hypothesis: Perceived organizational support is not related to employee performance.

H₁ Alternative hypothesis: Perceived organizational support is related to employee performance.

Coworker Support and Employee Performance

Coworkers are members of an organization who hold relatively equal power or authority and with whom an employee interacts during the workday (Dar, 2010). Coworkers are an important category of social support in organizations. Coworker support refers to the social reward obtained by employees in relations with supportive and helpful coworkers who cooperate with each other as a team in the workplace (Nazir, Shafi, Qun, Nazir & Tran, 2016). Shakespeare-Finch and Obst (2011) suggested different sources of social support, including family, friends, coworkers, and supervisors. However, in the work domain, coworkers and supervisors are considered as the sources of social support through which an employee seeks care, respect and help to achieve his goals and objectives in the workplace.

The relationship between coworker support and employee performance seems to be different. Certain studies mention that coworker support may reduce work-related problems and induce better performance. Karatepe, (2016) found that employees with such support are likely to manage work-related problems better due to the immediate assistance they can obtain from their coworkers. Similarly, two critical functions of co-worker support are to help the individual to do something (instrumental support) and provide sympathy (emotional support) (Sepdiningtyas & Santoso, 2017). Emotional support can be realized through listening to coworkers' problems. Instrumental support is manifested through helping to complete the work of co-workers (Beehr, Jex, Stacy & Murray, 2000).

Organizational socialization studies have found that supportive coworkers help newcomers adjust better to work settings and improve job performance (e.g., Bauer, Bodner, Tucker, Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo & Tucker, 2007). Few other studies have argued the reverse findings. Pelin and Osoian (2021) found that co-workers' support is not relevant for task performance. However, the relationship between coworker support and employee performance still needs to be investigated further because of the inconsistent findings of the empirical research. From the above literature review, the following set of null and alternative hypotheses was developed.

H₀₂ Null Hypothesis: Co-worker support is not related to employee performance.

H₂ Alternative Hypothesis: Co-worker support is related to employee performance.

Organizational Politics and Employee Performance

Ferris, Perrewé, Anthony and Gilmore (2000) defined that organizational politics “involves an individual’s attribution of behaviors of self-serving intent and is defined as an individual’s subjective evaluation about the extent to which the work environment is characterized by co-workers and supervisors who demonstrate such self-serving behavior.” Organizational politics refers to actions by organizational members that are self-interested and directed toward furthering their own goals, without regard for the well-being of others or the organization (Kacmar & Baron, 1999). Some examples of these actions include withholding information from coworkers, failing to enforce policies and procedures appropriately, using flattery to gain favors, shifting blame, and maligning others to make oneself look better.

There are studies that relate organizational politics and employee performance. Abun, Macaspac, Magallanes, Catbagan, and Mansueto (2022) examined the effects of organizational politics on the individual work performance of employees. A study found that there is a significant correlation between organizational politics and individual work performance. Movahedi, Bidkhor, Arazi, Khaleghipour and

Amini (2020) stated that organisational politics is not purely a negative factor for organizations, and that its consequences include positive effects such as enhanced employee commitment and organizational citizenship behaviors. In contrast, some studies have proved that there is a negative relationship between organizational politics and employee performance. Chinelato, Tavares, Ferreira and Valentini (2020) emphasized that environments with higher organizational politics often produce negative organizational images, which can entail harmful consequences for work. Movahedi et al. (2020) investigated the relationship between positive perceptions toward organizational performance and work-related outcomes in nurses, including stress level, burnout level, turnover intention, and job satisfaction in nurses at Neyshabur University of Medical Sciences Hospitals in Iran. The results indicated that the participants did not hold positive perceptions toward organizational politics. From the above literature review, the following set of null and alternative hypotheses was developed.

H₀₃ Null Hypothesis: Organizational politics is not related to employee performance.

H₃ Alternative Hypothesis: Organizational politics is related to employee performance.

Research Methodology

The study population comprises all nurses at the Teaching and General Hospitals in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka. There are 3,823 nurses from both hospitals in Northern Province (1,622) and those in Eastern Province (2,201). According to the formula given by Malhotra (2010), the sample size for this study was calculated. Usable sample size (787) of the nurses is 331 from hospitals in Northern Province and 456 from those in Eastern Province. This study employed a well-structured questionnaire administered in person by data collectors. Data were collected from the sample respondents of 787. This study was a cross-sectional survey approach. To collect data, the researcher engaged during the period from 2022 to 2024. The study applied both SPSS for descriptive data analysis and Smart PLS 4.1 for the purposes of data analysis. This study graphically presented both the direct reflective measurement model and the structural model (SEM), as depicted in Figures 1 and 2. Both models are direct models that explain the direct relationships among three independent variables, such as perceived organizational support, co-worker support and organizational politics and the dependent variable, employee performance, to determine the influence of perceived organizational support, co-worker support, and organizational politics on employee performance of nursing officers in Sri Lankan hospitals. Data analysis was conducted in two stages: the reflective measurement model and the reflective structural model, as depicted in Figures 1 and 2.

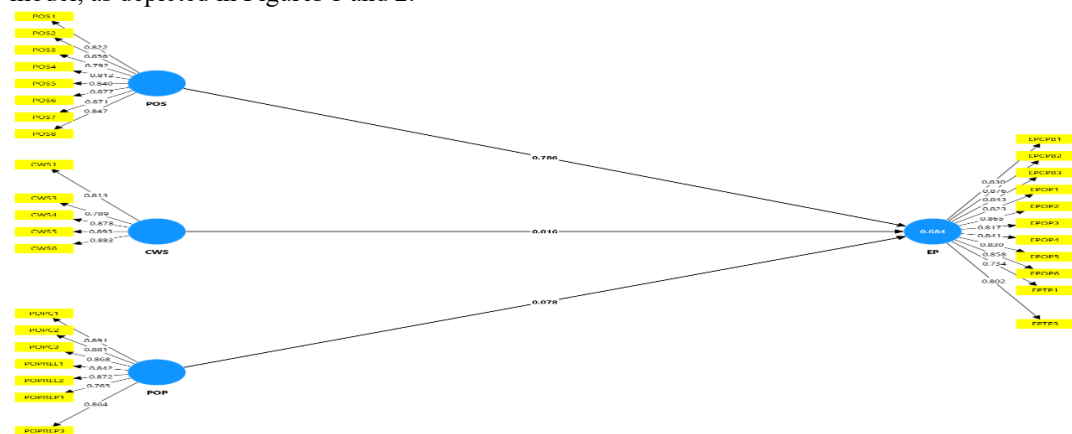


Figure 1: Direct Reflective Measurement Model

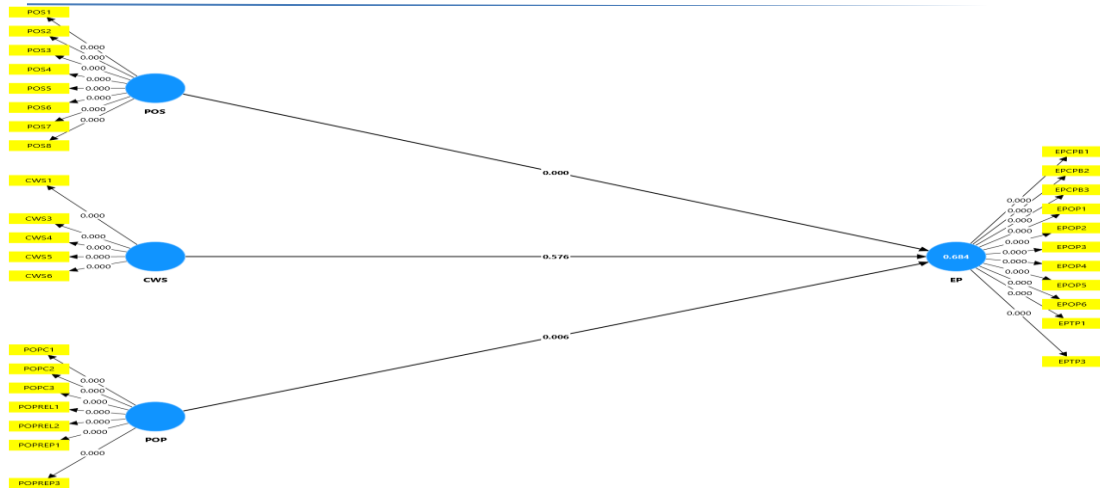


Figure 2: Direct Reflective Structural Model

Assessing Reflective Measurement Models

To assess the reflective measurement model, reliability and validity are evaluated using indicators of reliability (e.g., indicator reliability), internal consistency, convergent validity, and divergent validity.

Indicator Reliability

Indicator reliability is checked by item loadings. Each item needs to have an item loading value that is greater than 0.7. An item that has a loading value below 0.7 is removed from the analysis. Outer loading values of all items of all independent variables, such as perceived organizational support, organizational politics and co-worker support, are greater than 0.7 as tabulated in Table 1. Similarly, outer loading values of all items of the dependent variable, employee performance, were above 0.7 as tabulated in Table 1.

Table 1: Indicator reliability: Outer loadings of all items of independent variables such as perceived organizational politics, organizational support and co-worker and dependent variable, employee performance.

IDVs		Indicator reliability: Outer loadings
CWS	CWS1, CWS3, CWS4, CWS5, CWS6	0.813, 0.789, 0.878, 0.893, 0.883
EP	EPCPB1, EPCPB2, EPCPB3, EPOP1, EPOP2, EPOP3, EPOP4, EPOP5, EPOP6, EPTP1, EPTP3	0.830, 0.876, 0.843, 0.823, 0.865, 0.817, 0.841, 0.830, 0.858, 0.734, 0.802
POP	POPC1, POPC2, POPC3, POPREL1, POPREL2, POPREP1, POPREP3	0.891, 0.881, 0.868, 0.842, 0.872, 0.765, 0.864
POS	POS1, POS2, POS3, POS4, POS5, POS6, POS7, POS8	0.822, 0.856, 0.792, 0.812, 0.840, 0.877, 0.871, 0.847

Internal consistency reliability

Internal consistency reliability is checked using either of the two measures, such as Composite reliability (Rho_a) or Cronbach's Alpha. Each item must have a rho_a value greater than 0.7. An item with a composite reliability (rho_a) below 0.7 was omitted from the analysis. Composite reliability value (rho_a) values of all items of all independent variables, such as perceived organizational support, coworker support and organizational politics, were greater than 0.7 as tabulated in Table 2. Similarly, Cronbach's Alpha value should also be greater than 0.7. An item that had a Cronbach's Alpha value that was below 0.7 was also omitted from the analysis. Cronbach's Alpha values of all items of all

independent variables, such as perceived organizational politics, coworker support and organizational politics, were also greater than 0.7 as tabulated in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Internal Consistency Reliability: Composite reliability (Rho_a) & Cronbach Alpha and Convergent validity of all IDVs and DV

	Internal Consistency Reliability: Composite reliability (Rho_a) & Cronbach Alpha		Convergent validity of all IDVs and DV
	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
CWS	0.905	0.912	0.726
EP	0.955	0.956	0.689
POP	0.939	0.943	0.732
POS	0.940	0.941	0.706

Convergent validity

Convergent validity was checked by Average Variance Extracted, abbreviated as AVE that was greater than 0.5. Variable that had an AVE value that was below 0.5 was omitted from the analysis. Similarly, Average Variance Extracted values of all independent variables such as organizational politics, perceived organizational support and co-worker support are greater than 0.5 as tabulated in Table 2. The average variance extracted for the dependent variable, employee performance, was above 0.5, as shown in Table 2 above.

Divergent validity

Divergent validity is checked by heterotrait-monotrait ratio abbreviated as HTMT. HTMT value should be less than 0.85. An item that had an HTMT value that was greater than 0.85 was omitted from the analysis. HTMT values of all independent variables such as perceived organizational politics, organizational support and co-worker support were below than 0.85. Similarly, the HTMT values of the dependent variable, employee performance, were also below 0.85. Values for Divergent validity (HTMT) are tabulated in Table 3.

Table 3: Divergent Validity - HTMT

	CWS	EP	POP	POS
CWS				
EP	0.509			
POP	0.723	0.393		
POS	0.560	0.766	0.385	

Assessing the Structural Model

In order to assess the structural model, the three measures, such as (1) path coefficient checking significance with t and p values, (2) quality criteria's explanatory power by R-squared, and (3) predictive power by Q2 predict, are used in this study.

Path coefficient

Path coefficient is one of the measures of a structural model. There are three paths in this direct research model. The first path between perceived organizational support and employee performance. This first path is significant ($p < 0.05$) with the t value of 30.966. Significance of the path refers to the null hypothesis being rejected and the alternative hypothesis being accepted. Accepting the alternative

hypothesis refers to the perceived organizational support being related to employee performance. The second path is between co-worker support and employee performance. This second path is not significant ($p < 0.576$) with the t value of 0.559. Non-significance of the path refers to the null hypothesis being accepted, and the alternative hypothesis being rejected. Rejecting the alternative hypothesis refers to the fact that co-worker support is not related to employee performance. The third path is between organizational politics and employee performance. This third path is significant ($p < 0.05$) with the t value of 2.751. Significance of the path refers to the null hypothesis being rejected and the alternative hypothesis being accepted. Accepting the alternative hypothesis refers to the fact that organizational politics is related to employee performance. Path coefficient checking- t and p values for perceived organizational support, organizational politics, coworker support, work engagement and employee performance are tabulated in Table 4.

Table 4: Path coefficient checking- t and p values for perceived organizational support, organizational politics, coworker support, work engagement and employee performance

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
CWS -> EP	0.016	0.018	0.029	0.559	0.576
POP -> EP	0.078	0.079	0.028	2.751	0.006
POS -> EP	0.786	0.785	0.025	30.966	0.000

Quality criteria: Explanatory power of R square

Quality criteria are another measure of the structural model. Quality criteria use the explanatory power of R-squared. Quality criteria of the model are explained by R-squared and adjusted R-squared. Value of R-squared is 0.684, which describes three independent variables, such as perceived organizational support, coworker support and employee performance. The adjusted R-squared is 0.683, which describes three independent variables: perceived organizational support, coworker support, and employee performance.

PLS predict

Pls predict is another measure of the structural model. Pls predict uses Q2 predict which refers to predictive power of model. Values of Q2 predict is tabulated in Table 5.

Table 5: Q2 predict

	Q ² predict
EPCPB2, EPCPB3, EPOP1, EPOP2, EPOP3, EPOP4, EPOP5, EPOP6, EPTP1, EPTP3	0.445, 0.522, 0.488, 0.453, 0.512, 0.447, 0.537, 0.492, 0.497, 0.317, 0.428

Findings and Summary of Discussion

This study had three research objectives. The first objective of this study was to determine the influence of perceived organizational support on employee performance. As per the results of R-squared and hypothesis tests, perceived organizational support influences employee performance. The results of this study indicated that the perceived organizational support influences employee performance, which is consistent with recent studies of Hasan, Waseem, Sarfraz and Wajid (2023) who found that perceived organizational support positively affects job performance during the COVID-19 crisis among nursing staff of government hospitals in Pakistan; Sabir, Ali, Majid, Sabir, Mehmood, Rehman and Nawaz (2022) who found that perceived organizational support and affective commitment have a significant positive impact on employee performance in Pakistan and Saudi Arabian IT companies and Li, Jameel, Ma, Sun,

Hussain and Mubeen, (2022) who found that there are positive relationships between perceived organizational support and employees' performance.

The second objective was to know the influence of coworker support on employee performance. According to R-squared and hypothesis testing, the alternative hypothesis is rejected, indicating that coworker support is not related to employee performance. This study's findings are consistent with previous research. Several studies have reported that coworker support does not have a statistically significant effect on nurses' performance. For instance, Pelin and Osoian, (2021) found that co-workers' support is not relevant for task performance; Tran, Nguyen, Dang and Ton (2018) showed that co-workers' support is not relevant for job performance.

The third objective was to know the influence of organizational politics on employee performance. In terms of the results of R-squared and hypothesis testing, organizational politics influences employee performance. The findings of this proposed research are similar to previous research findings of Abun et al. (2022), who found that there is a significant correlation between organizational politics and individual work performance; Abun et al. (2022) found that a moderate level of organizational politics affects individual work performance positively. The study suggests that the conceptual framework developed in this study can be used as a strategy for enhancing the employee performance of nurses in Government hospitals in Sri Lanka. Employee performance can be enhanced by focusing on perceived organizational support and organizational politics in Government hospitals in Sri Lanka. The findings of this study would only be applicable to the nurses of Sri Lankan hospitals.

Conclusion

This study is undertaken to know the influence of perceived organizational support, coworker support, and organizational politics on employee performance of nurses in Government hospitals in Sri Lanka. Perceived organizational support, coworker support and organizational politics on employee performance have been studied in Sri Lanka and abroad at different contexts in different period. But this study focuses its attention on how perceived organizational support, coworker support, and organizational politics influence employee performance in the context of nurses in Government hospitals in Sri Lanka. This study concluded that perceived organizational support and organizational politics influence employee performance of nurses in Government hospitals in Sri Lanka, whereas co-worker support is not related to employee performance.

Limitations of the Study

This research has been conducted among nursing officers working in government hospitals in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan health sector is broad and vast. There are different types of employees who work in the health sector. This study has been limited to nurses, which is a type of health staff who serve the Sri Lankan health sector. In Sri Lanka, there are nine provinces. Of which, only two provinces have been considered for the study. This study has considered only three independent variables, such as perceived organizational support, coworker support and organizational politics and a dependent variable, employee performance. Employee performance can also be affected by some other external factors. This study has a limited sample size. The sample size can be increased for future studies.

Avenues for Further research

Potential academics and researchers can undertake research in this health sector by addressing the limitations mentioned in this study. This study could be conducted across all seven provinces in Sri Lanka. All three independent variables, such as perceived organizational support, organizational politics and co-worker support, have explained 68% of the variation in the dependent variable, employee performance. There is room for further improvement in future by considering a few more variables.

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