



Agricultural Personnel's Proactive Behavior: Effects of Self efficacy Perceptions and Perceived Organizational Support

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Abstract

A model for predicting psychological empowerment and proactive behavior was examined with 80 agricultural personnel from Karaj, Iran country. They completed measures of perceived organizational support (POS), psychological empowerment (PE), self efficacy (JSE), and proactive behavior (PB). Results supported the conceptual framework of study for understanding internal and motivational underpinnings that may contribute to explain psychological empowerment and proactive behavior. Perceived organizational support and self efficacy related positively to psychological empowerment and proactive behavior, and perceived organizational support and self efficacy each contributed distinctive variance to the explanation of psychological empowerment. Self efficacy partially mediated the relationship between perceived organizational support and psychological empowerment, psychological empowerment partially mediated the relationship between self efficacy and proactive behavior, and the combination of psychological empowerment and self efficacy fully mediated the relationship between perceived organizational support and proactive behavior. Finally, the research provided managerial implications.

Key words: Psychological Empowerment (PE); Proactive Behavior (PB); Perceived Organizational Support (POS); Self Efficacy

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INTRODUCTION

Practitioners and scholars have underscored the importance of viewing personnel as active agents, who are able to engage in proactive work behaviors that facilitate positive changes in themselves and their work environment (Bateman and Crant, 1993; Crant, 2000; Grant and Ashford, 2008). Unremittingly pressure for innovation, career models that require greater self direction and the growth of decentralized and empowered organizational structures all increase the need for personnel to use their initiative and self-starting behaviors as proactive behaviors (Campbell, 2000; Parker, 2000). According to Parker and Collins (2010), proactive work behaviors are those self-initiated, change oriented, and future-directed behaviors that facilitate positive change within the internal organization in which personnel and other resources integrated together to ensure organizational development and performance. Proactive work behaviors are indispensable during times of uncertainty, change, and increasing interdependence and reciprocal measures (Griffin *et al*, 2007). As organizations continue to face uncertainty, through increasing demands of new technology, changing economic agendas, and a move to a global dynamic economy; the proactive work behaviors of their personnel are becoming more essential. However, it has been acknowledged that fostering proactive behaviors among personnel of existing organizations is imperative; the research on proactivity and its antecedents remains uncharted, particularly in the context of Iran country organizations. Proactive work behaviors are positively related to both personnel's job

satisfaction and performance (Ashford and Black, 1996; Grant *et al*, 2009; Griffin *et al*, 2010). These positive organizational work outcomes of personnel's proactive behaviors illustrate the potential impact that proactive work behaviors may have within the workplace context. As such, a greater understanding of the antecedents of proactive work behaviors is warranted to pave the way for targeting organizational programs toward improving supportive organizational climates and personnel's coordinated cognitive changes. Based on literature review, proactive concepts have been operationalized at the three levels, e.g., individual, team and organizational levels. In this study, we focus on individual-level proactive work behavior. Also, based on literature review, both individual differences and contextual factors are considered as antecedents to proactive work behaviors (Crant, 2000; Parker *et al*, 2010). However, researchers have mainly emphasized individual differences as antecedents to proactive work behavior. For instance, general self-efficacy and felt responsibility (Morrison and Phelps, 1999), desire for control (Ashford and Black, 1996), and proactive personality (Parker and Collins, 2010), have been found as factors affecting proactive work behaviors. Moreover, according to Parker *et al* (2006), cognitive motivational states may explain the process by which individual differences influence proactive work behaviors. One positive cognitive motivational state that has been less examined as a possible mediating antecedent between organizational and individual factors to explain personnel's proactive behaviors is psychological empowerment. Conger and Kanungo (1988) defined psychological empowerment as a process of increasing personnel's feelings of self-efficacy (self efficacy can be considered as competence component of psychological empowerment). Also, Konczak *et al* (2002), defined psychological empowerment as a process of enhancing feelings of self-efficacy through the identification of conditions that foster powerlessness and also through their removal by both organizational practices (such as organizational support), informal techniques and by providing efficacy information. Based on the related literature, psychological empowerment has been defined as reflecting personal sense of control in the workplace, as manifested in the four beliefs about the person-work environment relationship in the four cognitions: meaning, competence, self-determination and impact. If one of the dimensions is not there, then the experience of empowerment among personnel of one organization will be limited. Therefore, all the cognitions need to be present at the same time in order to maximize the personnel's feeling of being empowered. Kanter (1983), in the case studies of entrepreneurial organizations found inextricable link between empowerment and innovative behavior. Thomas and Velthouse (1990), concerning explanation of innovative behavior suggested the relationship between

psychological empowerment and personal flexibility. In addition to perceptions of psychological empowerment, personnel's perceptions of organizational support, would facilitate or impede their self efficacy perceptions and consequently their proactive behaviors. According to Eisenberger *et al* (1986), when personnel feel the organization emphasizes their personal contribution and welfare, they tend to develop a sense of obligation toward the organization. The personnel's level of perceived organizational support (POS) reflects their innermost feelings about the organization's care and emphasis. Personnel with a sense of POS feel that in circumstances where they need work or life support, the organization is willing to lend a helping hand; personnel personally feel respected, cared for, and recognized, and in turn display increased cooperation, identification, diligent performance, appreciation, and reciprocity among personnel. Based on the principle of reciprocity, personnel with POS not only help coworkers, but also increase their own job satisfaction and organizational commitment, while reducing resignations and absenteeism, thus stimulating personnel's job performance (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). According to Spertizer (1995), psychological empowerment (PE) refers to how personnel view themselves in the work environment (effect of organizational support) and the extent to which they feel competent for shaping their behaviors in the work. Relationship of perceived organization support and personnel's psychological empowerment has not been investigated accurately and sufficiently in management literature. For example, Walton (1985) argued that organizational support facilitates mutual trust between organization and personnel which enhance their sense of confidence and increases their impact at work place. Vogt and Murrell (1990) suggested that interdependence (reciprocity) of personnel and organization creates collaborative and supportive environment for both parties that, in turn, empowers personnel through developing their sense of self-efficacy (as competence component of psychological empowerment). According to Parker *et al* (2006), there is a missing comprehension in what the right support for stimulating proactive behaviors should be. Some forms of organizational support may contribute to personnel's proactive behaviors, while others may impede their proactive behaviors. Forms of organizational support that help and encourage personnel to be self-directed and self-managing, as that of supervisors that 'lead others to lead themselves', will boost proactivity (Parker *et al*., 2006). Moreover, only the supervisor support aspect of organizational support has been frequently investigated in the relationship between organizational support and proactive behavior. For example, Frese *et al* (1999), suggested supervisors influence the climate that hampers or supports creativeness and innovativeness, but they found instead that organizational support and supportive

supervisors did not influence creativity and initiative processes. In addition to perceived organizational support (POS) and psychological empowerment (PE), self efficacy beliefs are another important issue in organizational behavior research. According to Bandura (1991), self-efficacy perceptions, concerning self-regulatory behaviors, affect the goals people set, the strategies people choose, the effort people extend, and the perseverance people show. In general, job self-efficacy is defined as personnel's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of organizational performance (Mosley *et al*, 2008). Also, prior research indicates that job self-efficacy is a cognitive self-appraisal of the ability to perform well in individuals' job, and thus the job self-efficacy positively relates to psychological and physical health and job performance at the end of personnel's work terms (Lubbers *et al*, 2005). There is scant literature focusing on the relationship between perceived organizational support and personnel's perceptions of their job self efficacy. However, lee (2003), found a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and organization-based self-esteem (OBSE) (OBSE is defined as the degree to which an individual believes him/herself to be capable, significant, and worthy as an organizational member, Pierce *et al*,

1989). Overall, results of previous meta-analyses demonstrated that, regardless of the setting or the methodology used, self-efficacy is a proximal, robust, and consequential antecedent of behavior (proactive behavior in this study) across multiple spheres of human activity (For example, Stajkovic and Luthans, 1998). Based on organizational behavior literature, numerous studies investigated the factors affecting organizational behaviors, but examine how psychological empowerment (PE), perceived organizational support (POS), job self efficacy (JSE), and proactive work behaviors (PB) among personnel of one organization interact, merits further investigation, especially in the context of agricultural organizations from Iran country (see figure 1). The model tested in this study, incorporated perceived organizational support and self efficacy perceptions antecedents to analyze accurately the mediating role of psychological empowerment on agricultural personnel's proactive behavior. According to Figure 1, personnel's perceptions of organizational support lead to their increased levels of self efficacy perceptions and consequently lead to their proactive behaviors via mediating of psychological empowerment. Moreover, the direct relationship of perceived organizational support and self efficacy has been considered in the conceptual framework of study.

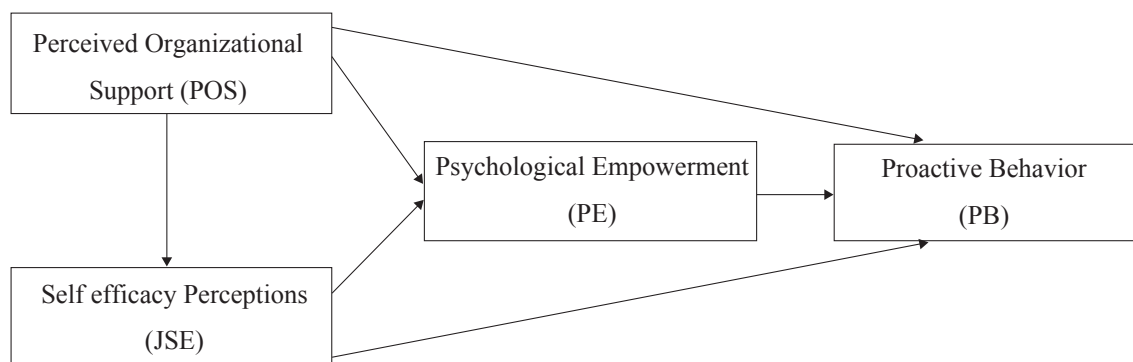


Figure 1
Conceptual Framework of Study (Partially Mediated Framework).

1. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Eighty (80) agricultural personnel of agricultural organization of Karaj city from Iran country participated in this study (from late June to August 2011), that were selected randomly as statistical sample based on the Morgan table (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970) from the statistical population of 100. According to descriptive statistics results, most agricultural personnel of study had university education and were with 11-15 years tenure in the organization. Correlation analysis (covariance matrix analysis type) and casual relationships methods were used as analytical strategies. Model parameter estimation

was supported by structural equation modeling. In this study, structured questionnaire was used to gather the required data. For analyzing data, descriptive statistics and zero-order Pearson correlation analysis were applied. Moreover, a two-step structural equation modeling (SEM) procedure was employed to establish construct validity and test the relationships of perceived organizational support (POS), psychological empowerment (PE), job self efficacy (JSE), and proactive behavior (PB) among agricultural personnel. SEM is a priori technique, meaning that the researcher must specify a model (conceptual framework), in order to conduct the analysis (Kline,

2005). In SEM, parameters are estimated by minimizing the difference between the observed covariances and those implied by the model. In the present study, Lisrel 8.50 package was used to test the relationships of specified constructs in the study framework. The estimation method employed was maximum likelihood (ML). Based on literature review, proactive work behaviors have largely been examined as separate and discrete forms of behavior. Parker and Collins (2010) reported that the second-order factor of proactive work behaviors included four dimensions: individual innovation, problem prevention, taking charge and voice. Individual innovation occurs when personnel recognize new and emerging opportunities, generates new ideas, and works to implement those ideas. Problem prevention occurs when personnel seek to discover the root cause of problems, and implement procedures to prevent future reoccurrence of the problem. Taking charge occurs when personnel seek to improve the way work is executed (i.e., work structures, practice, and routines). Finally, the proactive behavior of voice occurs when personnel express constructive challenges to improve the standard procedures of their work environment. For measuring agricultural personnel's proactive work behaviors, four main items (individual innovation, problem prevention, taking charge and voice) adopted from Parker and Collins' (2010) measure. This measure included 13 items reported on a five-point Likert-type scale (1=very infrequently to 5=very frequently). These items were averaged in order to become an index of proactive behavior of agricultural personnel. Five items modified from Mosley et al. (2008) was used to measure agricultural personnel's job self-efficacy (JSE). These items were as follow: JSE₁. I am confident in meeting the quality demands of the job, JSE₂. I am confident in

correcting the mistakes in my work, JSE₃. I am confident in following all of the safety rules on the job, JSE₄. I am confident in maintaining job performance and JSE₅. I am confident in keeping up with the operational pace of my organization. The 5-item scale for measuring POS (perceived organizational support), adapted from Rhoades *et al* (2001). These items were: POS₁: My organization cares about my opinions, POS₂: My organization really cares about my well-being, POS₃: My organization strongly considers my goals and values, POS₄: Help is available from my organization when I have a problem, and POS₅: My organization would forgive an honest mistake on my part. The 12-item scale for measuring psychological empowerment (PE₁: Competence, PE₂: Meaning, PE₃: Self-Determination and PE₄: Impact) was adopted from Spreitzer (1995). Items of perceived organizational support (POS), job self efficacy (JSE) and psychological empowerment (PE) were measured on the Five - Point Likert type scale (From 1, strongly disagree to 5, strongly agree).

2. RESULTS

Means, standard deviations, internal consistency reliabilities, and intercorrelations for all of the constructs are presented in Table 1. Notably, correlations between measures of perceived organizational support (POS), job self efficacy (JSE), psychological empowerment (PE), and proactive behavior (PB) were generally moderate, ranging from 0.34 to 0.65 (median=0.42). These correlations indicate that the four variables (POS, JSE, PE and PB) included in the conceptual framework of study, were measuring related, but different, constructs.

Table 1
Correlations and Reliabilities for All Constructs of Study

Constructs	POS	JSE	PE	PB
POS	-			
JSE	0.38**	-		
PE	0.65**	0.39**	-	
PB	0.43**	0.34**	0.57**	-
α	0.85	0.89	0.90	0.89
Mean	2.75	3.95	3.00	2.96
SD	0.64	0.44	0.77	0.90

“POS”: Perceived Organizational Support; “JSE”: Job Self Efficacy; “PE”: Psychological Empowerment; “PB”: Proactive Behavior.
** P <0.01.

According to the results of Table 1, agricultural personnel's proactive behaviors (PB) were correlated positively and significantly with three constructs of perceived organizational support (POS), job self efficacy (JSE), and psychological empowerment (PE), (P <0.01). However, agricultural personnel's perceptions related to their psychological empowerment (PE) showed more positively and significantly relationship with

their proactive behaviors (r=0.57, P < 0.01). Overall, agricultural personnel perceived their proactive behaviors as moderate level (Mean= 2.96), suggesting that personnel felt somewhat good about their behaviors as proactive. Agricultural personnel's perceptions of their organizational support correlated positively and significantly with their perceptions of psychological empowerment more than other constructs (r=0.65, P <0.01). Few

studies investigated the relationship between perceived organization support and psychological empowerment among personnel of an organization, but positive and significance relationship of POS with PE in this study is congruent with the results of Walton (1985) and Vogt and Murrell (1990). Also, few studies investigated the relationship between perceived organizational support and job self efficacy. In this study, agricultural personnel's perceptions of their organizational support correlated positively and significantly with their job self efficacy ($r=0.38$, $P < 0.01$). This finding is congruent with the findings of lee (2003). Two path analyses applied to test the fit of the data to the conceptual framework of study, as well as a tailored version of the model with the direct path from perceived organizational support (POS) to proactive behavior (PB) fixed to zero. The fit of the data to each model (model 1, 2) was evaluated using the χ^2 significance test, comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Fit Index (TLI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). According to results of table 2, the fit of model 1 was perfect (just identified). Figure 2 delineates and Table 3 shows the standardized path coefficients for model 1. As delineated in Fig. 2, hypothesized paths from perceived organizational support to job self efficacy ($\beta=0.38$, $p < 0.01$) and psychological empowerment ($\beta=0.60$, $p < 0.01$), job self efficacy to psychological empowerment ($\beta= 0.15$, $p < 0.05$) and proactive behavior ($\beta= 0.13$, $p < 0.05$), and psychological

empowerment to proactive behavior ($\beta=0.49$, $p < 0.01$) were all statistically significant. The hypothesized direct relationship between perceived organizational support and proactive behavior was not significant ($\beta= 0.04$, ns). Also, according to the results of Table 3, job self efficacy partially mediated the effect of perceived organizational support on psychological empowerment (0.06 , $p < 0.05$), psychological empowerment partially mediated the effect of job self efficacy on proactive behavior (0.08 , $p < 0.05$), and the combination of job self efficacy and psychological empowerment significantly mediated the effect of perceived organizational support on agricultural personnel's proactive behaviors (total indirect effect = 0.38 , $p < 0.01$). Disintegration of the total indirect effect revealed that effect of perceived organizational support on agricultural personnel's proactive behaviors occurred through psychological empowerment (0.29 , $p < 0.01$) and a combination of job self efficacy and psychological empowerment (0.03 , $p < 0.05$), whereas its precise indirect effect on agricultural personnel's proactive behaviors via self efficacy perceptions alone (0.06 , ns) was nonsignificant. Model 2 was similar to model 1, with the exclusion that the nonsignificant direct path from perceived organizational support to agricultural personnel's proactive behaviors found in model 1 was fixed to zero. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (1996), one of overarching aims in employing structural equation modeling (SEM), is achieving the most parsimonious, well-fitting conceptual framework possible, thus we tested model 2.

Table 2
Fit Indices

Model	χ^2	df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
Model 1	0.00	0	1.00	1.00	.000	.000
Model 2	0.49	1	1.00	1.00	.000	.009

CFI=comparative fit index; TLI=Tucker-Lewis Fit Index; RMSEA=root mean square error of approximation; SRMR=standardized root mean square residual.

According to Table 2, model 2 showed an excellent fit to the data than model 1. Moreover, model 2 showed similar proportion of variance on explaining agricultural personnel's perceptions of psychological empowerment ($R^2=0.48$) and their proactive behaviors ($R^2=0.36$) as did model 1. Based on these findings, model 2 was found the best fitting conceptual model of constructs explaining agricultural personnel proactive behaviors. As delineated in Fig. 3, paths from perceived organizational support to self efficacy perceptions ($\beta = 0.38$, $p < 0.01$) and psychological empowerment ($\beta = 0.60$, $p < 0.01$), self efficacy perceptions to psychological empowerment ($\beta=0.15$, $p < 0.05$) and proactive behavior ($\beta = 0.14$, $p < 0.05$), and psychological empowerment to proactive behavior ($\beta = 0.54$, $p < 0.01$) were all statistically

significant. Also, self efficacy perceptions partially mediated the effect of perceived organizational support on psychological empowerment (0.06 , $p < 0.05$), psychological empowerment partially mediated the effect of self efficacy perceptions on proactive behaviors, and the combination of self efficacy perceptions and psychological empowerment significantly mediated the effect of agricultural personnel perceptions of their organizational support on their proactive behaviors (total indirect effect = 0.41 , $p < 0.01$). Disintegration of the total indirect effect revealed that effect of perceived organizational support on proactive behavior occurred primarily through psychological empowerment (0.32 , $p < 0.01$); however, additional indirect effects through self efficacy perceptions (0.06 , $p < 0.05$) and a combination

of self efficacy perceptions and psychological empowerment (0.03, $p < 0.05$) were also significant. These findings indicate that the effects of perceived organizational support on psychological empowerment, and self efficacy perceptions on agricultural personnel's

proactive behaviors, were partially mediated. The effect of perceptions of organizational support on agricultural personnel's proactive behaviors, however, were fully mediated by antecedents of psychological empowerment and self efficacy perceptions.

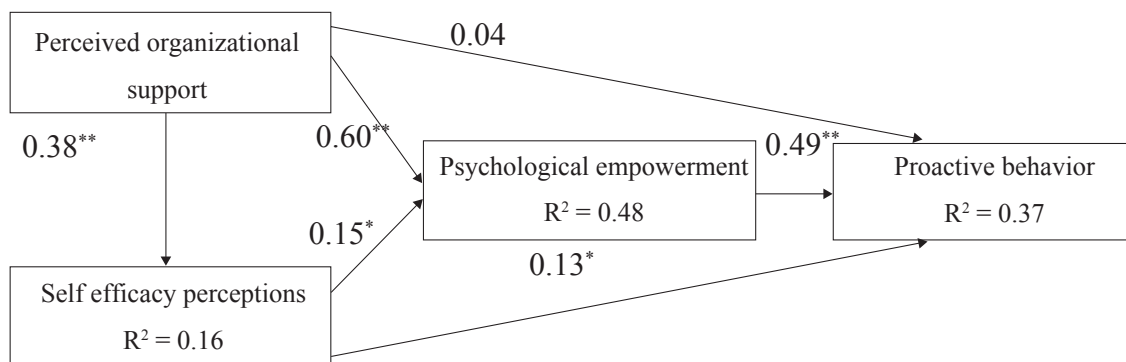


Figure 2
Standardized Coefficients for Model 1
* $P < 0.05$; ** $P < 0.01$.

Table 3
Standardized Direct and Indirect Coefficients.

Model	Standardized Estimate
Model 1	
<u>Direct effects</u>	
Perceived organizational support to job self efficacy	0.38**
Perceived organizational support to psychological empowerment	0.60**
Perceived organizational support to proactive behavior	0.04
Job self efficacy to psychological empowerment	0.15*
Job self efficacy to proactive behavior	0.13*
psychological empowerment to proactive behavior	0.49**
<u>Indirect effects</u>	
Perceived organizational support to psychological empowerment via job self efficacy	0.06*
Perceived organizational support to proactive behavior via psychological empowerment	0.29**
Perceived organizational support to proactive behavior via job self efficacy	0.06
Perceived organizational support to proactive behavior via job self efficacy and psychological empowerment	0.03*
job self efficacy to proactive behavior via psychological empowerment	0.08*
Model 2	
<u>Direct effects</u>	
Perceived organizational support to job self efficacy	0.38**
Perceived organizational support to psychological empowerment	0.60**
Job self efficacy to psychological empowerment	0.15*
Job self efficacy to proactive behavior	0.14*
psychological empowerment to proactive behavior	0.54**
<u>Indirect effects</u>	
Perceived organizational support to psychological empowerment via job self efficacy	0.06*
Perceived organizational support to proactive behavior via psychological empowerment	0.32**
Perceived organizational support to proactive behavior via job self efficacy	0.06*
Perceived organizational support to proactive behavior via job self efficacy and psychological empowerment	0.03*
Job self efficacy to proactive behavior via psychological empowerment	0.08*

* $P < 0.05$; ** $P < 0.01$.

3. DISCUSSION

The present findings are congruent with other literature that scrutinizes the contribution of internal and motivational underpinnings (such as self-efficacy perceptions, organizational climates, and psychological empowerment) on explaining work

behaviors. However, this study integrated antecedents of perceived organizational support (POS) and self efficacy perceptions (JSE) to concisely analyze the mediating role of psychological empowerment (PE) as a factor less examined with mediating effect between organizational and individual factors, to explain agricultural personnel's proactive behavior (PB). The present results also

provide some support for understanding motivational underpinnings that may contribute to explaining proactive work behaviors and also for self-efficacy as a proximal and consequential antecedent of behavior across multiple spheres of human activity. Although the causal effect of perceived organizational support and self efficacy perceptions on psychological empowerment and proactive behavior cannot be analyzed accurately given the correlational nature of the present data, all path coefficients were significant and in the postulated directions of conceptual framework of study. Of note, too, in this study, were the considerable proportions of variance found for psychological empowerment (48%) by antecedents of perceived organizational support and self efficacy perceptions, and in proactive behaviors (36%) by the combination of perceived organizational support, self efficacy perceptions, and psychological empowerment. These large effects underscore the potential value of

perceptions of organizational support and self efficacy for improving personnel's motivational and psychological contexts to behave creative and proactive. Few studies have shown that perceptions of organizational support and self efficacy contribute significantly to the prediction of psychological empowerment and proactive work behaviors and targeting organizational programs toward improving supportive organizational climates and coordinated personnel's cognitive changes. With considering this fact, results of this study indicated that both perceptions of self-efficacy and organizational support appeared to contribute unique variance to the explanation of agricultural personnel's perceptions of their psychological empowerment. This is especially important because in this study, effects of perceived organizational support on agricultural personnel's proactive behaviors were fully mediated by antecedents of psychological empowerment and self efficacy perceptions.

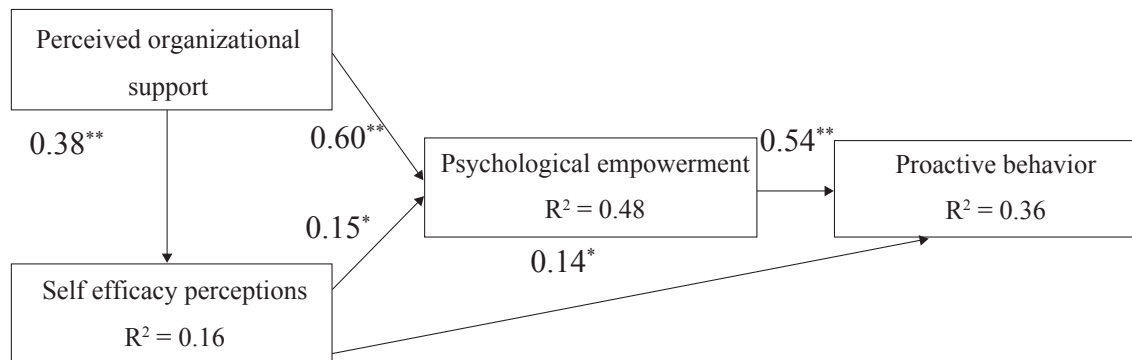


Figure 3
Standardized Coefficients for the Parsimonious and Well-Fitting Model
 * P < 0.05; ** P < 0.01.

Moreover, the effects of perceived organizational support on psychological empowerment, and self efficacy perceptions on agricultural personnel's proactive behaviors, were partially mediated. Therefore, it can be concluded that agricultural personnel's proactive work behaviors and their perceptions of psychological empowerment are likely to be strengthened when they both view themselves as competent and feel that their organization cares and emphasizes about their personal contribution and welfare. Prior studies had shown that personnel with POS not only help coworkers, but also increase their own job satisfaction and organizational commitment, while reducing resignations and absenteeism, and stimulating job performance (Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002). Also, Konczak et al (2002), defined psychological empowerment as a process of enhancing feelings of self-efficacy through the identification of conditions that foster powerlessness and also through their removal by both organizational practices (such as organizational support), informal

techniques and by providing efficacy information. In this study, respondents with higher levels of both self efficacy and POS indicated higher levels of psychological empowerment and proactive work behaviors. Moreover, the analyses revealed that POS related to psychological empowerment both directly and indirectly through self efficacy perceptions, and it appears as though POS may be a stronger predictor of psychological empowerment than are self efficacy perceptions. Thus, it is possible that agricultural personnel in this sample derived their perceptions of psychological empowerment more from feeling supportive of their organization than from their perceived competencies on executing courses of action required to attain designated types of organizational performance. Practically, then, if one desires to understand personnel's perceptions of their psychological empowerment, it appears as though both self-efficacy and organizational support could provide valuable information, but perceptions of organizational support may remain the stronger predecessor of psychological empowerment

overall. As proactive work behaviors are positively related to both personnel's job satisfaction and performance (Ashford and Black, 1996; Grant *et al*, 2009; Griffin *et al*, 2010), it is imperative to gain a better understanding of the factors affecting personnel's proactive behaviors. The present findings in this regard are congruent with prior results indicating that self efficacy, organizational support and psychological empowerment variables are factors affecting proactive work behaviors (Kanter, 1983; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990; Frese *et al.*, 1999; Morrison and Phelps, 1999). More specifically, for agricultural personnel in this sample, both perceptions of organizational support and self efficacy related to proactive behaviors, as did psychological empowerment antecedent. Psychological empowerment related directly to proactive behavior, and self efficacy perceptions and POS related to proactive behavior indirectly through psychological empowerment and a combination of psychological empowerment and self efficacy perceptions, respectively. Overall, psychological empowerment indicated more contribution on explaining agricultural personnel's proactive behaviors than other constructs. In addition, self efficacy perceptions, but not POS, were related directly to proactive behavior. These relations imply that the effect of POS on proactive behavior was primarily indirect but that of self efficacy perceptions was primarily direct. Thus, perceptions of psychological empowerment via POS and the direct role of self efficacy may be paramount to consider when encouraging proactive behaviors among agricultural personnel. The direct effect of self efficacy perceptions on proactive behaviors and partial mediation effect of self efficacy perceptions between POS and psychological empowerment in this study emphasized on the need of supportive organizational climates and increased levels of competency beliefs to increase agricultural personnel's psychological empowerment and proactive behaviors, respectively. Personnel's perceptions of their organizational support, beyond both psychological empowerment and self-efficacy, may be a valuable indicator of whether their organization encourages them to be self-directed and self-managing or not?. According to Parker *et al* (2006), cognitive motivational states may explain the process by which individual differences influence proactive work behaviors. This study integrated psychological empowerment as cognitive motivational state in the conceptual framework of study and tested its mediating effect between antecedents of perceived organizational support and job self efficacy and proactive behavior. Only when it combined with self efficacy perceptions, could fully mediate the relationship between perceived organizational support and proactive work behaviors. Therefore, it can be recommended that the combined and synergistic effects of job self efficacy and psychological empowerment should be considered when agricultural managers desire to increase the effect

of organizational support on agricultural personnel's proactive behaviors. As other studies in the field of work and organizational psychology, this study did have some limitations. First, this study applied cross-sectional design for collecting data. This means that we cannot unambiguously determine the direction of relationships found. More research using a longitudinal design is needed to further disentangle the causal relationships between perceived organizational support (POS), job self efficacy (JSE), psychological empowerment (PE), and proactive behavior (PB). However, all path coefficients observed in this study were significant and in the postulated directions of conceptual framework of study. Second, as this study took place in only one organization and in one country, further study is needed to assess the validity and generalizability of our findings across different organizational and national contexts.

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