

## *What Precedes Flexible Role Orientation?*

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### **Abstract**

Wild race of business nowadays enforces organization to form a troop of reliable employee. This is not the time to rely on employee with mediocre vision and point of view. Organization needs a team of powerful employees with flexible role orientation who see broader task as something within their range of responsibilities. Having less number of employees who perceived other task outside the given task as their scope of role is more favorable than having large number of employees who patronized with given job description.

This study investigates the notion precedes employee flexible role orientation on state owned bank employees in Surakarta, Indonesia. Job self-efficacy and role breadth self-efficacy significantly show their positive effect on flexible role orientation. However, role breadth self- efficacy shows stronger correlation to flexible role orientation than job self efficacy.

Keywords: job self efficacy, role breadth self efficacy, and flexible role orientation

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## **Introduction**

Modern business today seems more like an arena of competition. As new company in the business born, old company needs to gain source of strength in order to survive the battle. Otherwise, markets will swift into the new company as young company comes with fresh ideas and strategies. Finally, the battle left only survivors and wiped sapless.

Human is believed as the motor of organization for they play important role in executing organizational operations. Hence, to have a troop of reliable employee is a powerful weapon to compete on the wild race of business. Further, organization cannot rely on conventional employee who hold on to given and habitual task. It needs individuals with broader concept about their responsibilities.

Previous research suggested that flexible role orientation of employee will enhance their individual performance (Parker, 2007) which surely leads to organizational performance. Further, Srikanth and Jomon (2013), see the importance of employee flexible role orientation as an entry to extra-role behavior which believed as another formula to great performance of organization. Therefore, employee flexible orientation is a precious recipe for every organization success.

As many research studied the contribution of flexible role orientation on performance (Parker, 2007) and its importance in answering today's emphasis on customer service (Straub, 1993; Conrad, 2013), flexible role orientation emerges as a serene struck in organizational theory. However, research investigates the thing which precedes flexible role orientation still needs to be encouraged.

## **Literature Review and Hypotheses**

### ***Flexible Role Orientation***

As role orientation is very personal, an employee may have different role orientation than the other. Parker, Wall, and Jackson (1997) define role orientation as a set of task which worker concerned as his/her responsibility. By so, employee can have narrow or broad role orientation depends on how he/she perceives various tasks as his/her scope of responsibility. Employee with flexible role orientation will have broader scope of tasks which he/she perceives as his/her duty.

In the same tone with flexible role orientation, Morrison and Phelps (1999) underline the importance of "taking charge behavior" in the workplace. It carries the form of extra-role behavior which is change-oriented and development intended. Instead of focusing on restricted "traditional" role orientation, employees not only need to develop strategic orientation, but also need to carry broader and proactive concept to their roles (Parker, Wall, and Jackson, 1997). By doing so, they will hold possession and responsibility toward their job without limited to the given job description. Further, they will realize how important to use their extended skills in achieving success on that broader concept of role. Employees with flexible role orientation will see task related to their job as "it's my job" rather that "it's not my job."

### ***Job Self-Efficacy***

Bandura (1986) defines job self-efficacy as:

“People’s judgment of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances.”

People with high job self-efficacy have a strong belief that they have enough resources to perform certain tasks. Thus, they believe that they will be able to carry the job and achieve success. On the other side, people with lower job self-efficacy will see the assigned job as a stressor as they feel unsure about their capability in carrying it.

Experts see job self-efficacy as a positive notion that they suggest it leads to positive behavior in a workplace. Employees with high job self-efficacy will be motivated (Ayupp and Kong, 2010), have good performance (Barling and Beattie, 1983), and perform proactive behavior (Speier and Frese, 1997). Kanfer et al (1994) revealed how job self-efficacy explains that despite of the same knowledge and ability workers have to execute a task, they have different attitudes toward the task. Further, self-efficacy has three main components: (1) magnitude, dealing with how far an employee is sure that he/she is able to perform a certain task; (2) strength, shows an employee's belief that he/she is able to do the job further into a certain level; and (3) generality, refers to how far self-efficacy might develop into certain tasks or situations (Kanger and Kanfer, 1991). Hence, it is predicted that job self-efficacy will be positively related to flexible role orientation.

H1: Job self-efficacy will be positively related to flexible role orientation

### ***Role Breadth Self-Efficacy***

Parker (1998) defines role breadth self-efficacy as how far an employee feels confident in carrying broader roles beyond the traditional or given boundaries. It is a type of self-efficacy which is in line with the notion of performing broader proactive roles. Role breadth self-efficacy is believed as an important construct as it leads to positive individual outcomes at work (Ohly and Fritz, 2007; Parker, 2000). As the same as job self-efficacy which describes the confidence of employees in carrying certain sets of tasks, role breadth self-efficacy emphasizes on employees' confidence in carrying broader sets of tasks regardless whether they are allowed or not in executing it (Bandura, 1994; Salanova et al, 2002; Galperin, 2005).

Role breadth self-efficacy originally formed in the relation to flexible performance requirements in the organization (Parker, 2000). Role breadth self-efficacy refers to employees' belief and confidence about their abilities and capabilities in handling a set of proactive, interpersonal, and integrative activities which far exceed from their traditional main tasks which have been formally assigned to them (Parker, Williams and Turner, 2006).

Role breadth self-efficacy and flexible role orientation capture similar components; proactive motivational states which lead to broader perceived task domains; involve cognitive and learning processes to broader perceived task responsibilities (Parker, 2000). It is predicted that role breadth self-efficacy will be positively related to flexible role orientation.

H2: Role breadth self-efficacy will be positively related to flexible role orientation.

## **Sample and Procedure**

Data collected from state owned banks employees operate in Surakarta, Indonesia. There were five banks in total. First, meeting with each human resource department officer of the bank was held to give information about the study, its goal, and its procedure. Then, a set of questionnaire was delivered to the banks to be checked by the human resource department for approval. Finally, the data collection was conducted mannerly. From the 300 questionnaires sent, 246 were returned and 244 were usable, representing a response rate of 82%.

Sample (N = 244) consisted of state owned bank employee. The sample includes 128 males (52.5%) and 116 females (47.5%) The mean age of the respondents was 36.84 years (SD = 8.711) and the mean tenure was 12.94 years (SD = 8.320). All of the respondents are full time employee handling saving, loan, and administrative work.

### ***Measures***

Job-self efficacy ( $\alpha = 0.840$ ) was assessed using three items from Wang and Netemeyer (2002). Respondent were asked to indicate their confidence in performing their given task. The items include "I feel capable in doing my job well". The response scale ranged from 1 = very untrue to 5 = very true.

Role breadth self-efficacy ( $\alpha = 0.871$ ) was measured using seven items adopted from Parker (1998). Employees were asked to rate how sure they are in performing certain tasks which describe broader task than their job description. Sample items include "How sure are you to visit people from another department to suggest a different way in doing task" and "How sure are you to in representing your working area on a meeting with senior manager". The response scale ranged from 1 = very unsure to 5 = very sure.

Flexible role orientation ( $\alpha = 0.838$ ) was measured using three items from Parker et.al. (1997). Respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they perceive problems as their concern rather than other's concern. Sample item includes "It is my job to generate new idea and try it". The response scale ranged from 1 = very untrue to 5 = very true.

### ***Control Variables***

Sum up from sources, gender and tenure are constructs which predicted to play role in explaining the relation of job self-efficacy, role breadth self-efficacy, and flexible role orientation.

## **Data Analysis**

CFA data analyses conducted using structural equation modeling (SEM) methods and executed by AMOS. Results showed a good fit on the model. Significant was reached with  $C_{min} = 130.359$ ;  $DF = 52$ ;  $C_{min}/DF = 2.507$ ;  $p = 0.000$ . The root-mean-square-error of approximation (RMSEA) showing the number of 0.079; below the cutoff value recommended by experts. The other fit indices showed the number of  $GFI = 0.926$ ;  $TLI = 0.923$ ;  $NFI = 0.919$ ;  $CFI = 0.949$  suggested a good fit of the model.

## Results

As predicted, results show that both job self-efficacy and role breadth self-efficacy are positively related to flexible role orientation. Role breadth self-efficacy shows (Table 1 and 2)  $B = 0.607$ ;  $p < 0.01$  and job self-efficacy shows  $B = 0.279$ ;  $p < 0.01$ . Results also shown that role breadth self-efficacy has stronger correlation than job self-efficacy to flexible role orientation (Table 3). Therefore, hypotheses 1 and 2 are supported.

To test the influence of controls variable, hierarchical regression was applied. The interaction of gender and tenure to the variables were done separately before take them into the calculation. Results suggested (table 1 and 2) that there are no influence of gender and tenure on the relation of job self-efficacy and role breadth self-efficacy to flexible role orientation.

Table 1. Hierarchical Regression Analysis- Job Self Efficacy

		Flexible Role Orientation	
		$\beta$	t
Step 1			
	Gender	-0.297	-0.579
	Tenure	-0.279	-1.452
Step 2			
	Job Self Efficacy	0.279**	3.095
R square 0.038			
N = 244			
Level of significance: ** $p < 0.01$ ; * $p < 0.05$			

## Conclusions

This study investigates employees' efficacy on their flexible role orientation. As predicted, job self-efficacy and role breadth self-efficacy are positively related to flexible role orientation. However, role breadth self-efficacy has stronger correlation to flexible role orientation than job self-efficacy. The result supports a study by Parker (2000) which saying that role breadth self-efficacy share common features with flexible role orientation even though they are completely different construct.

Further on this study, the prediction about effect of tenure and gender on the relationship between employee efficacy and flexible role orientation found no support. As the same as the relationship of job self-efficacy and flexible role orientation, the relationship of role breadth self efficacy and flexible role orientation is not affected by gender and tenure.

Table 2. Hierarchical Regression Analysis- Role Breadth Self Efficacy

		Flexible Role Orientation	
		$\beta$	t
Step 1			
	Gender	0.012	0.035
	Tenure	0.272	1.91
Step 2			
	Role Breadth Self Efficacy	0.607**	9.262
R square 0.262			
N = 244			
Level of significance: **p<0.01; *p<0.05			

Table 3. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Gender	1.52	0.5	1				
2. Tenure	12.94	8.32	0.150*	1			
3. JSE	4.08	0.577	0.115	0.067	1		
4. RBSE	3.48	0.696	0.162*	(0.008)	0.188**	1	
5. FRO	3.65	0.825	0.026	(0.139)*	0.195**	0.512**	1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

This result contributes to organizational practices theory. As the importance of flexible role orientation to organizational outcome cannot be neglected, organization needs to find formula to enhance employees' flexible role orientation. Job self-efficacy and role breadth self-efficacy empirically show their contribution in forming flexible role orientation. Hence, organization needs to improve their employees' job self-efficacy and role breadth self-efficacy by giving support facilities related to those precursors of flexible role orientation.

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