



## ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOURS: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL LITERATURE AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The purpose of this paper is to explain how to improve organizational citizenship behaviour and how to develop a plan to obtain continual OCB through formal system and informal environmental setting in work place. Organizational citizenship behaviours (OCB) describe actions in which employees are willing to go above and beyond their prescribed role requirements. Some studies have shown that OCB are positively related to indicators of individual, unit, and organizational performance. This paper focuses on clearly defining the relationship between organizational effectiveness and OCB. This paper will also discuss the implications of the OCB and try to find out how to improve OCB. Results indicate that positive work climate, organization resources, employee's personality, organizational culture and so on are all related to OCB. This research is important for any businesses which want to create competence and organizational effectiveness. To improve OCB is lowest cost and best way for businesses to reach organizational effectiveness.*

*The rapid growth of research on organizational citizenship behaviours (OCBs) has resulted in some conceptual confusion about the nature of the construct, and made it difficult for all but the most avid readers to keep up with developments in this domain. This paper critically examines the literature on organizational citizenship behaviour and other related constructs. More specifically, it: (a) explores the conceptual similarities and differences between the various forms of "citizenship" behaviour constructs identified in the literature; (b) summarizes the empirical findings of both the antecedents and consequences of OCBs; and (c) identifies several interesting directions for future research*

**Key Words:** *Citizenship Behaviours, Organizational Effectiveness, Model of OCB.*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The world is looking forward to high performance organizations, which would provide high job satisfaction to their employees and would also cherish excellence and effectiveness. This could be achieved if we could develop organizational citizenship.

Organizational citizenship behaviours are discretionary employee behaviours that are helpful but not absolutely required by employers. While a great deal of information has been gleaned about the importance of organizational citizenship behaviours in the workplace, the nature of work has fundamentally changed with this shift, the nature of organizational citizenship behaviour for modern workers is also likely to have changed. Thus, the field is ready for an evolution in how we conceptualize organizational citizenship behaviour that considers the contemporary nature of work. The author carried out a multistage qualitative study designed to provide an understanding of a new generation of organizational citizenship behaviours. The findings indicate that some established organizational citizenship behaviour concepts map onto knowledge workers' conceptualizations of such behaviour. However, other common, historical forms of organizational citizenship behaviour were deemed irrelevant in this context, and a set of new behaviours that had not surfaced in previous research emerged. These findings offer insight into the kinds of behaviours necessary for success in the new world of work. The author discussed the implications of this research for employee and organizational performance in the knowledge economy and introduces an initial instrument to assess these new forms of organizational citizenship behaviours.

Organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) is discretionary employee activity that is not explicitly part of the job description and which tends to promote the organization. This behaviour is also not a part of the official system of rewards and compensation. The term was first defined by Dennis Organ in 1988. It is not a thoroughly-defined concept by nature, though an employee who embodies the qualities of OCB is often easy to recognize. While an

employee who engages in OCB may not be specifically recognized for those actions, such behaviour will often be rewarded indirectly. This is partly because employees who practice OCB tend to be committed to their jobs and the overall health of the organization. They are also often adept at the core functions of their jobs, which can lead to formal recognition that includes unspoken appreciation for OCB. Some common traits observed in organizational citizenship behaviour include good sportsmanship, active involvement in all professional and social company activities, and general acceptance of the rules and culture of the organization. An employee who practices OCB will typically be an exceptionally strong team player who maintains goodwill among co-workers and keeps the spirits of others upbeat. Another strong element of OCB is personal initiative. A worker with good OCB will often be able to take charge of a situation with little direction. This kind of employee typically has an innate understanding of what needs to be done in order to promote organizational goals. Employees who practice OCB tend to be strong ambassadors for the company brand as well. Though organizational citizenship behaviour is by its nature removed from the official functions of an organization, it does not go entirely unnoticed. Some companies have attempted to define this kind of employee dedication, at least on an individual basis, so that the employee may be recognized and encouraged. Some people who are sceptical of the concept of organizational citizenship behaviour have also claimed that jobs no longer have the sort of structure that would allow for the phenomenon. The argument is that while most positions used to be well-defined, they are now often more pliable. Thus, it is arguably more difficult to distinguish between actions that are a part of the job and those that go above and beyond what is expected of the employee.

## **2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Research of organizational citizenship behaviours has been extensive since its introduction around twenty years ago (Bateman & Organ, 1983). Since then, the vast majority of organizational citizenship behaviour research has focused on the effects of organizational citizenship behaviour on individual and organizational performance. There is consensus in the field that organizational citizenship behaviours are salient behaviours for organizational enterprises. However, the antecedents of organizational citizenship behaviours are not well established. This paper focuses on clearly defining the relationship between organizational effectiveness and OCB and also will discuss the implications of the OCB and try to find out how to improve OCB.

## **3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Katz and Kahn (1978) pointed out that organizational citizenship is important in organizations. Organizational citizenship can be extremely valuable to organizations and can contribute to performance and competitive advantage (Nemeth and Staw 1989). This research is important for any businesses which want to create competence and organizational effectiveness. To improve OCB is lowest cost and best way for businesses to reach organizational effectiveness.

## **4. DEFINING ORGANIZATION CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOUR**

Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) is a relatively new concept in performance analysis but it represents a very old human conduct of voluntary action and mutual aid with no request for pay or formal rewards in return. The concept was first introduced in the mid-1980s by Dennis Organ and theory on in this area has expanded rapidly in the following years.

According to Organ (1988), the definition of organizational citizenship behaviours (OCB) is "individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization". Organ also noted that defining OCB as behaviours that are not formally rewarded is equally too broad, as few "in-role" behaviours actually guarantee a formal reward.

Dyne (1995) proposed the broader construct of "extra-role behaviour" (ERB), defined as "behaviour which benefits the organization and/or is intended to benefit the organization, which is discretionary and which goes beyond existing role expectations". Thus organizational citizenship is functional, extra-role, pro-social organizational behaviours directed at individual, groups and / or an organization. These are helping behaviours

not formally prescribed by the organization and for which there are no direct rewards or punishments. The author has excluded those pro-social behaviours that are prescribed by the organization as performance requirements and dysfunctional or non-compliant behaviours.

From the explanations above, Organ (1997) suggested that those definitions did not provide much clarity, noting that one's "job role" is dependent on the expectations of and communication from the role sender. The "sent role" could thus be less than or greater than the actual job requirements. This role theory definition thus places OCB or ERB in the realm of phenomenology, unobservable and completely subjective in nature. Organ (1997) suggested that Borman and Motowidlo's (1993) construct of "contextual behaviours" provided a more tenable definition of OCB. Contextual behaviours "do not support the technical core itself so much as they support the broader organizational, social, and psychological environment in which the technical core must function" (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993: p. 73). This definition is not clouded by any notions of discretion, rewards, or intent of the actor. This definition only assumes that the behaviours should support "the organizational, social, and psychological environment" rather than the "technical core." There is no specific motive presumed of the actor, nor are there any other antecedents inferred. What subjectivity that exists is that surrounding the fuzzy line between what is and is not included in the technical core. This ambiguity will likely persist. Thus, for the purposes of this paper, the definition of contextual behaviours will be adopted as the definition of OCB. The most critical element is that the behaviours are defined at face value. While they may support the organizational, social, or psychological environment, it may not be at all clear as to why the actor would be supportive. There is no presumption of altruism or kindness.

## 5. IMPORTANCE OF OCB

Successful organizations need employees who will do more than their usual job duties and provide performance that is beyond expectations. Organizational citizenship behaviours (OCB) describe actions in which employees are willing to go above and beyond their prescribed role requirements. Prior theory suggests and some research supports the belief that these behaviours are correlated with indicators of organizational effectiveness.

## 6. REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

Organ (1988) suggested that high levels of OCB should lead to a more efficient organization and help bring new resources into the organization. In Organ's explanation, securing needed resources refers not only to the attraction of new members or raw materials, but also to such intangible factors as company good will, or the external image and reputation of the organization. Thus, customer perceptions of the organization's products or services could be an external assessment of effectiveness that is influenced by OCB.

The present study examined relationships between OCB and organizational effectiveness.

A few studies have shown that OCB are positively related to indicators of individual, unit, and organizational performance (Werner, 1994; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1994; Podsakoff, Ahearne, & MacKenzie, 1997; Walz & Niehoff, 2000; ). Like most behaviours, OCB are probably multi-determined. That is, there is no one single cause of OCB. Theoretical frameworks for all other classes of organizational behaviour, from job performance to turnover to absenteeism, include multiple sources of causation. It makes sense to apply the same rationale to OCB. Relaxing the "single cause" parameter will keep the search for determinants of OCB from becoming narrow in focus and exclusionary in conceptualization.

## 7. OCB INFLUENCE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

Organ (1988) identified five categories of OCB:

- (1) **Altruism** -- the helping of an individual co-worker on a task,
- (2) **Courtesy** -- alerting others in the organization about changes that may affect their work,
- (3) **Conscientiousness** -- carrying out one's duties beyond the minimum requirements,
- (4) **Sportsmanship** -- refraining from complaining about trivial matters, and
- (5) **Civic virtue** -- participating in the governance of the organization

Each dimension of OCB offers a different rationale for this relationship. Altruism or helping co-workers makes the work system more productive because one worker can utilize his or her slack time to assist another on a more urgent task. Acts of civic virtue may include offering suggestions for cost improvement or other resource saving ideas, which may directly influencing efficiency. To a lesser extent, conscientiousness employees, as well as those who avoid personal gain or other negative behaviours, demonstrate compliance with company policies and maintain predictable, consistent work schedules, increasing the reliability of the service. As reliability increases, the costs of rework are reduced, making the unit more efficient (Berry & Parasuraman, 1991).

## 8. OCB - JOB SATISFACTION

Smith (1983) and Bateman and Organ (1983) conducted the first research on the Antecedents of Organizational Citizenship Behaviour, finding job satisfaction to be the best predictor. After 17 years of research, job satisfaction is still the leading predictor of OCB (Organ & Ryan, 1995). This is problematic because, descriptively, job satisfaction is in and of itself a challenging outcome sought by organizational managers. The resulting implications are restricted to suffice that OCB is likely when workers are satisfied. There are just as many questions regarding the antecedents of job satisfaction as there are questions about the antecedents of organizational citizenship behaviours. But according to Penner, Midili & Kegelmeyer, (1997) the job satisfaction is not only one reason for the accurate prediction of OCB.

## 9. OCB - MOTIVATION

Motivation is another observation for understating OCB. Three motive paradigms are often researched. Viewing OCB from these three motive paradigms, one can more easily account for the various approaches taken in prior OCB research. The altruistic path is covered quite well with the affiliation motive and part of the achievement motive, but the darker side is more clearly understood from the power motive. It is easy to see why OCB may correlate with ratings of performance and why. This motive-based view also helps make sense of the disparate findings of research seeking personality correlates of OCB (Organ, 1994). A wide variety of personality traits have been examined in research but results have been disappointing, as the only consistent correlation emerging is between the "big five" trait of conscientiousness and the OCB dimension of the same name. By viewing OCB as caused by multiple motives, one can see that different personality traits could predict OCB depending on the citizen's motive.

It is possible, however, that there are indirect outcomes of OCB that are related to the employees' motives. For example, if OCB are exhibited for power motives, supervisors may reinforce such behaviours with extrinsic rewards, promotions, or more visible assignments. Supervisors may be oblivious to such motives, seeing only the observable behaviours. Co-workers, on the other hand, may see the behaviours from a different, more political viewpoint. As the power-oriented citizen gains support for such behaviours from above, other employees can become discouraged and disengaged, not wanting to "play politics" to get ahead. The resulting outcome may be a culture of distrust, gossip, complaints, or subtle conflict, eroding cohesion and team building in the unit. Finally, the affiliation-oriented citizen may perform OCB to such a degree that the employee-employer relationship becomes dysfunctional. Similar to the concept of co-dependence in personal relationships, the dysfunctional relationship may cause more harm than good for the work environment. Motive-based theories of behaviour suffer from lack of research methodologies that can validly measure the constructs. It may be necessary to approach research from an attribution point of view. That is, instead of asking subjects about their own motives, seek the opinions and perceptions of co-workers as to the motives of the target person. Such a research strategy may also begin to reveal the indirect effects of motive-based OCB. Since OCB have been found to be associated with effectiveness measures in organizations, their importance cannot be denied.

## 10. SUMMARY

From the research above, Collectivism have a positive relationship with subsequent organizational citizenship. Propensity to trust has a positive relationship with subsequent organizational citizenship. Organization-based self-esteem as a mediator leading to organizational citizenship. Individual difference can significantly influence organizational citizenship. Original position that disposition can have important effects on organizational

citizenship behaviour. (Smith 1983) Individuals with high collectivism and propensity to trust are more likely to believe they can be a valued part of the organization, to value this role, and because of this belief, engage in behaviours to make a difference in the organization.

## 11. CONCLUSIONS

Organizations want and need employees who will do those things that aren't in any job description. And the evidence indicates that those organizations that have such employees outperform those that don't. As a result, some human subject studies are concerned with organizational citizenship behaviour as a dependent variable.

Organizational citizenship behaviours have often been conceptualized as inherently a socially desirable class of behaviours. It has been the purpose of this paper to strip away any biases and attributions for social desirability and to examine the behaviours in their strictly observable form. In doing so, a variety of motives can be examined as potential reasons why employees might exhibit OCB. Achievement, affiliation, and power are not new ideas, but the application of these motives to the study of OCB does provide a new lens through which to view OCB. Much research is still needed to validate the ideas expressed in this paper.

As defined by Organ (1988), OCB reflects a "good soldier syndrome" which is so necessary for the prosperity and good functioning of every organization. It means doing a better job, making an effort above and beyond formal requirements, and filling the gap between procedures and regulations on the one hand, and dynamic reality on the other. OCB is usually perceived as exerting exceptionally good behaviours for the sake of the organization and informally supporting its members. To date, and as far as we could find, no study has investigated the meaning and implications of OCB behaviours in the third sector. Obviously, such behaviours are important to private organizations since they affect their competitiveness and profitability. Thus, OCB represent a powerful element of free-will conduct, most relevant in third-sector organizations, which highlight values of voluntary personal actions especially among paid employees. Consequently it is interesting to examine how OCB is manifested in interpersonal relationships within work units of the non-profit sector.

Organizational citizenship is discretionary behaviour that is not part of an employee's formal job requirements, but that nevertheless promotes the effective functioning of the organization. (Robbins, 1996). Successful organizations need employees who will do more than their usual job duties and provide performance that is beyond expectations. In short, in order to reach that goal, fill full employee's job satisfaction, understand they motivation and create suitable work environments are most important thing in management reality.

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