Determinants of Organizational Citizenship Behaviour: A Review of Literature

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Scholars have studied various factors contributing towards Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) over the last three decades. However an integrated approach to the determinants of OCB is yet to emerge. Most of the researchers have examined the impact of only one or two factors on OCB, occasionally taking a third factor for probing its mediating role. Role of a number of important factors such as internal communication patterns, organizational culture, organizational climate, 'vision, mission and strategies', etc. as possible determinants of OCB has not been studied at length. Moreover, there is an urgent need to develop a composite view on the determinants of OCB while formulating any holistic policy to augment citizenship behavior among the employees. This review paper presents a comprehensive framework for delineating the determinants of OCB for the benefit of practicing managers as well as discerning academics and researchers.

Key Words: Organizational Citizenship Behaviour, Determinants, Integrated Approach

Introduction

Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) is characterized by discretionary efforts of the employees for the benefit of an organization without any expected rewards. OCB has evolved as a powerful concept over the last three decades. Both researchers and practicing managers are engaged in decoding the factors that augment OCB at the shop-floor and corporate offices across all sectors, more so in knowledge-driven establishments. OCB has been generally linked to increased efficiency and profitability, innovation and process improvement, and above all, customer satisfaction and retention and above all, ability of the employees to cope with several organizational uncertainties.

Characterization of OCB as discretionary has however been challenged by scholars as untenable (Zellars, Tepper & Duffy 2002). Indeed, distinction between required behavior and behavior that go beyond one's job description is too indistinct to merit any definitive labeling such as organizational citizenship behaviour especially when the role perceptions of the employees and employers vary inordinately (Rousseau, 1989, Graham, 1991, Van Dyne, Graham , & Dienesch, 1994, Morrison, 1994, Pond, Nacoste, Mohr, Rodriguez, 1997, Lam, Hui,, & Law, 1999). Further, Tepper, Lockhart, and Hoobler (2001) observed that employees' indulgence in extra role behavior depend on how far they define such efforts as an integral part of their jobs.

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Concept of OCB

Despite raging controversy over the nature of OCB, it is interesting to explore how the concept evolved and influenced management perspectives in recent times. Dennis W. Organ pioneered the concept OCB in late 1970s although scholars often endeavoured to account for the voluntary extra-role behavior or pro-social behavior at the workplace inspired by their own volition sans any remunerative considerations even during the formative stages of the evolution Management literature (Barnard, 1938, Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939). Moreover, the scholars having research interest in OCB have benefited from the studies conducted in Social Psychology as well (Blau, 1964, Katz & Kahn, 1966, Krebs, 1970). Organ (1977) published a paper titled 'A Reappraisal and Reinterpretation of the Satisfaction-Causes-Performance Hypothesis' that generated tremendous academic interest among the scholars and practitioners to decode the antecedents of such casual contributions of the employees which were not the part of their job description and as such could not be a source of reward or punishment (in case of non-performance).

Organ along with his doctoral students field-tested the hypothesis and published the outcomes in 1983. All the efforts made by the employees to help their colleagues or to conform to the contractual role prescription were termed as Organizational Citizenship Behaviour or OCB (Bateman & Organ, 1983, Smith, Organ & Near, 1983). It was also assumed that job related attitudes of the employees such as job satisfaction, turnover intentions and organizational commitment were best exhibited through actions over which they had greater discretion. Studies by Organ and his colleagues confirmed that employees with higher job satisfaction participated in OCB more enthusiastically. They delineated two dimensions of OCB viz. altruism, or helping specific persons, and generalized compliance, a more impersonal form of conscientious citizenship. Later, Organ (1988) added sportsmanship, courtesy and civic virtue as other dimensions of OCB alongside altruism and generalized compliance. Williams & Anderson (1991) classified OCB into two distinct categories: OCBI –behavior that is directed towards individuals in the organization; and OCBO –behaviour that is directed towards augmenting organizational effectiveness. While altruism and courtesy are associated with OCBI, conscientiousness, sportsmanship and civic virtues are connected to OCBO (Van Dyne, Cummings & Parks, 1995).

Organ's classification of various dimensions of OCB may be summarized as under:

- *Altruism*, "helping other members of the organization in their tasks" (e.g. voluntarily helping less skilled or new employees, and assisting co-workers who are overloaded or absent and sharing sales strategies);
- *Courtesy*, "preventing problems deriving from the work relationship" (e.g. encouraging other co-workers when they are discouraged about their professional development);
- *Sportsmanship*, "accepting less than ideal circumstances" (e.g. petty grievances, real or imagined slights);
- *Civic virtue*, "responsibly participating in the life of the firm (e.g. attending meetings/functions that are not required but that help the firm, keeping up with changes in the organization, taking the initiative to recommend how procedures can be improved); and
- *Conscientiousness*, "dedication to the job and desire to exceed formal requirements in aspects such as punctuality or conservation of resources" (e.g. working long days,

voluntarily doing things besides duties, keeping the organization's rules and never wasting work time).

In view of diverse interpretations of the term vis-à-vis its nature and scope, Organ redefined OCB as efforts that contributed to the maintenance and enhancement of the social and psychological context that supported task performance (Organ, 1997**).**

DETERMINANTS OF OCB
Individual Dispositions & Motives
Individual dispositions e.g. positive affectivity, negative affectivity, conscientiousness, agreeableness etc. have been linked to OCB (Organ & Ryan, 1995). Interestingly, Konovsky and Organ (1996) predicted that agreeableness would relate particularly with altruism, courtesy, and sportsmanship, whereas conscientiousness would relate with generalized compliance. Extraversion has also been described as key dispositional determinant of social behavior (Barrick, et al., 2005). However, Comeau & Griffith (2005) provided empirical evidence contrary to the popular notion that individual dispositions and OCB were linked.

Locus of control also plays an important role in determining the level of OCB displayed by the employees. People with internal locus of control tend to engage in OCB more enthusiastically than those with external locus of control (Blakely, Srivastava & Moorman, 2005). However, this assumption needs to be verified empirically for broader generalization. Elanain (2007) has found empirical evidence regarding an association between openness to experience, conscientiousness, and emotional stability on the one hand and OCB on the other.

Besides the individual dispositions, employees are driven by their intrinsic or extrinsic motives to indulge in OCB (Pennar et al., 1997). In case the employees are intrinsically motivated, they would engage in extra-role behavior primarily for the benefit of the coworkers. On the other hand, the employees with higher extrinsic motivation would engage in OCB so as to cultivate a good image for themselves. However, such personality/disposition oriented OCB must be managed with great care. Becton, Giles and Schraeder (2008) observed that formally evaluating and rewarding OCB could create emotional dissonance for intrinsically motivated employees, thereby resulting in emotional exhaustion and burnout whereas these measures would invariably enhance the intensity of OCB among employees who are extrinsically motivated.

Groups Cohesiveness
Employees generally relate to their immediate work group. Obviously, work group has tremendous influence on their attitudes and conduct. Groups become effective and powerful as the members develop indomitable affinity and indefatigable urge to remain connected. Individual members are more sensitive towards others and forthcoming in helping others in need in case the group is cohesive (Schachter, et al, 1951). Further, cohesiveness augments positive mood states leading to greater effectiveness of the entire group (Gross, 1954). Cartwright (1968) has truly observed that cohesiveness leads to greater intra-group communication, favourable interpersonal evaluations and stronger group influence over its members and higher OCB incidence especially if it matches group norms.

Moreover, mutual benefits accruing from OCB may also augment its incidence (Axelrod, 1984). According to Mudrack (1989), even mutual commitment of group members towards each other and their tasks influenced the extent to which they would indulge in extra-role behavior. Taking cue from social exchange theory, Organ (1990) observed that OCB may

reflect members' effort to sustain exchange relationships within the group –something that is governed by social rather than any financial considerations. On the other hand, Isen & Baron (1991) have maintained that positive mood states emerging from inexhaustible cohesiveness stimulate altruism towards fellow members.

Quality of working relationships among the group members also plays a crucial role in augmenting their helping behavior (Anderson & Williams, 1996). Indeed, work group cohesiveness, mutual commitment and mutual benefits engender citizenship behaviour aimed at helping each other rather than contributing to organizational effectiveness ((Kidwell, Jr., Mossholder & Bennett, 1997).

Employee Attitudes
Employee attitudes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment have often been liked to OCB. Smith, Organ & Near (1983) in their seminal study found a definite correlation between job satisfaction and OCB. Puffer (1987) arrived at a similar conclusion in a later study. Murphy, Athanasou & King (2002) also found that job satisfaction was substantially correlated with employees' OCB. Foote & Tang (2008) maintained that job satisfaction and OCB were significantly correlated and the association became all the more noteworthy where the team commitment happened to be greater. Interestingly, mere presence of higher level of team commitment would not augment OCB in case the employees are reeling under lower levels of job satisfaction (Tang et al. 2008).

Level of organizational commitment also influenced the incidence of OCB in several cases (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986, Organ, 1990). Schnake (1991) appropriately observed that the employees indulge in OCB primarily as token of repayment for the fulfillment and belongingness they derive from highly satisfying job and holistic image of their respective organizations. Thus, higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment are reflected in their involvement in the affairs of the organization beyond the call of duty. Further, Morrison (1994) tried to establish a positive association between affective commitment and OCB which however were mediated by job breadth. Van Dyne, Graham & Dienesch (1994) among other scholars observed that OCB depended on the positive attitudes of the employees towards their jobs as well as the organizations.

Job involvement is another employee attitude that contributes significantly towards fostering OCB. According to Kanungo (1982), it refers to the degree to which individuals psychologically identify with their present job –the employees develop strong relationship with their jobs so much so that they invest their personal resources in their current job. Turnipseed (1996) also found that involvement and task orientation contributed positively towards extra-role behaviour of the employees well beyond their contractual obligations. Indeed, job involvement induces positive mood and higher degree of professional and organizational commitment, making the current job all the more fulfilling which in turn result in OCB (Hoffi-Hofstetter and Mannheim, 1999). Even Mudrack (2004) has opined that employee with higher degree of job involvement tend to focus on job-related activities even in their spare time – such as thinking of ways to perform even better.

Leader-Member Exchange and Supervisory Behaviour
Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) refers to quality of relations shared between leaders/managers and their subordinates. Employees are most likely to engage in OCB in case the managers display transformational leadership behavior such as envisioning, role modeling, invigorating subordinates intellectually and communicating higher performance

expectations (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, & Bommer, 1996). Moreover, leaders' contingent reward behaviour such as expressing satisfaction or appreciation for good performance also contribute towards employees' OCB (Podsakoff et. al, 2000).

Further, employees with whom the managers share valued resources such as time, information and personal support tend to consistently perform OCB with passion as compared to those whose managers adhere to contractually established job roles (Hui, Law & Chen, 1999). On the contrary, the employees may withhold OCB in case the managers are exploitative to the extent that the subordinates feel abused (Zellars, Tepper, & Duffy, 2002). Hence the key to employees involvement in OCB lies in the hands of the leaders. Indeed, leaders can encourage the employees' engagement in OCBs, even in the case of thwarting personality characteristics (Emmerik & Euwema, 2007). Obviously, much depends on the leadership effectiveness so far as OCB is concerned.

Bhal, Guati & Ansari (2009) have provided empirical evidence regarding loyalty aspect of OCB being an outcome of LMX where organizational commitment acts as a mediator: 'Commitment is an individual's identification with the organization. It is this identification that makes the employee takes up tasks that are not routine. Since loyalty as a form of citizenship behaviour is an extra-role behaviour of the subordinate, the behaviour results from the employees' sense of identification with the organization'.

Organizational Justice
Organizational justice has often been linked to OCB. Greenberg (1996) has defined organizational justice as a concept that reflects employees' perception about the extent to which they are treated fairly in organizations and how such perceptions affect organizational outcomes such as commitment and satisfaction. Hoy & Tarter (2004) have provided a comprehensive set of principles determining organizational justice:
- The principle of equality: This presupposes that the contributions made to the organization by individuals are in proportion to their incomes.
- The principle of perception: The effect of the general perception of justice on the individual.
- The principle of polyphony: This assumes that an increase in participation in decision making will entail an increase in fair decisions.
- The principle of interpersonal justice: This presupposes that respectful, kind and mature behaviours will be displayed in order to ensure justice.
- The principle of consistency: This is based on the view that consistency in leaders' behaviours is essential to create a perception of justice among those in inferior positions.
- The principle of political and social equality: This assumes that it is essential to share a collective organizational mission in decision-making and to take decisions according to personal interests independently.
- The principle of correction: This is related to the amelioration of wrong or bad decisions.

Organizations which follow the general principles of organizational justice may ensure a good measure of distributive justice (fair distribution of organizational resources), procedural justice (propriety of procedures in decision-making) and interactional justice (fairness in treatment of organizational members). Each of these dimensions of organizational justice is crucial in shaping the organizational citizenship behavior of the employees in a particular

organization. Bhal (2006) has emphasized a mediating role of procedural and interactional justice in augmenting OCB in the context of LMX. Yılmaz & Tas¸dan (2009) have indicated that there exist only moderate positive relations between organizational justice perceptions and actual OCB.

Conclusion

Scholars have studied various factors contributing towards OCB over the last three decades. However an integrated approach to the determinants of OCB is yet to emerge. Most of the researchers have examined the impact of only one or two factors on OCB, occasionally taking a third factor for probing its mediating role. Impact of a number of important factors such as internal communication patterns, organizational culture, organizational climate, 'vision, mission and strategies', etc. as possible determinants of OCB has not been studied at length. Moreover, there is an urgent need to develop a composite view on the determinants of OCB while formulating any holistic policy to augment citizenship behavior among the employees.

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