

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) Practices among Employees in Academic Institution

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Abstract: *Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is defined as individual behavior that is discretionary, indirectly or clearly recognized by a formal reward system, which promotes efficiency and affects organizational functions. Despite of numerous studies on OCB, very few of them highlighted the relationship between demographic profile and OCB practices. Thus, the present study aims to identify the OCB practices by demographic profile of employees in an academic institution in Malaysia, which focused on the five dimensions of OCB, namely altruism, sportsmanship, civic-virtue, courtesy and conscientiousness. There were 227 employees participated in this study, including academicians and non-academicians. The results from Chi-Square test showed that only employment status was found to have significant association with OCB practices.*

Keywords: Organizational Citizenship Behavior, OCB, Demographic

1. Introduction

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is defined as individual behavior that is discretionary, indirectly or clearly recognized by a formal reward system, which promotes efficiency and affects organizational functions (Organ, 1988). In another words, it states that OCB is a form of voluntary contribution of employees in the workplace that goes beyond its role as stipulated in the agreement (Organ & Ryan, 1995). Therefore, the presence of OCB in an organization cannot be made a requirement (Organ, 1988), while its absence cannot be punished (Van Dyne, Cummings & Parks, 1995). OCB can indirectly increase the effectiveness of the organization if they made it as a practice. However, there are few factors that can cause a person not to practice OCB which are transparency and justice (Mohammad, Quoquab & Omar, 2016), self-efficacy, organizational commitment, peer support and organizational climate (Elias, 2014), and employee trust in organizational leadership (Zeinabadi & Salehi, 2011). Not many employees know that OCB is important as it can ensure the progress and success of the organization (Mohamed Azim & Zaid, 2017). According to Hamidah, Faezah and Halimatul (2017), without a high OCB, organization may face a high number of employee turnover and low commitment rates among employees. These will in turn lead to decreasing of organizational performance.

Employees' level of turnover intention can be reduced if they are loved and treated well by the organization. This can be seen through the OCB practices among the employees. Nonetheless, there were less studies on OCB focused on the association between demographic profiles of academic institution employees in Malaysia. Therefore, this study is conducted to identify the OCB practices by demographic profile of employees in an academic institution in Malaysia which focused on the five dimensions of OCB, namely altruism, sportsmanship, civic-virtue, courtesy and conscientiousness.

2. Literature Review

There are variety of OCB classifications that have been issued by previous researchers. Podsakoff et al. (2000) have listed 30 different types of OCBs while William and Anderson (1991) have classified OCBs into two main categories namely individual OCBs (OCBI) and organizational OCBs (OCBO). Even though there are many classifications for OCB by previous researchers, the most commonly used was as proposed by Organ (1988), which divided OCB into five dimensions, namely the altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, civic-virtue and conscientiousness.

The first dimension of OCB is altruism, which can be defined as voluntarily behavior that helps colleagues to perform specific tasks or solve any related organizational problems. Meanwhile, the study further defined courtesy as a behavior that is polite and considerate towards others. It also can be defined as discretionary behavior that aimed at preventing work-related conflicts among employees (Law, Wong & Chen, 2005). The third dimension which is sportsmanship is defined by Organ (1988) as the willingness on the part of employees which represents the tolerance of employees to the imperfect state of the organization without complaining and raising the problem. Employees with sportsmanship attitude always maintain a positive attitude and they are not easily offended if their suggestions or opinions are not accepted or acknowledged. Next, Organ (1988) also mentioned civic virtue as one the OCB dimensions which can be characterized as a behavior that illustrates the deep concern of employees and the active interest in organizational involvement. The last dimension of OCB is conscientiousness, which is defined as an attitude of commitment to work that exceeds the requirements, such as working long hours and volunteering to carry out other tasks. In addition, it also refers to the attitude of employees who do something that goes beyond their duties for the benefit of the organization (Allameh et al., 2011).

Previous studies have discovered different results on the relationship between demographic variables and OCB. For example, Chan and Lai (2017) found that gender, age, job level, and tenure exercise a significant difference on OCB which is similar to the results by Podsakoff, Ahearne and MacKenzie (1997). However, results from a recent study by Abdullah and Mohd Kamil (2020) indicates no significant difference between gender, age, education level and job tenure on OCB. Specifically, male and female employees share a comparative level of citizenship behavior in the public institution. In addition, employees' age group, level of education and job tenure have no distinctions with respect to the level of citizenship behavior. Similar to the study Kamel, Ilyes and Zohra (2015) and Yadav and Rangnekar (2015) where they found no differences between demographic variables and employees' OCB.

A recent study on the demographic profile and OCB by Mirković and Cizmic (2019) found that there were significant differences between gender and employees' OCB. They mentioned in their study that women showed a higher level of citizenship behavior since they are more concerned and thoughtful for others. Chen, Hu and King (2018) reported that there are

significant differences between service-oriented OCBs and workplace deviance on the basis of gender, age, marital status, education, position, department, and monthly income groups. In the study, male respondents conveyed higher service-oriented OCBs than females. This study also reported that age group, education level, position grade tenure have significant difference between employees' OCB. Considering the results from previous studies, hence this study proposed the following hypotheses:

- H1** : There is significant differences between gender and employees' OCB.
- H2** : There is significant differences between age group and employees' OCB
- H3** : There is significant differences between education level and employees' OCB
- H4** : There is significant differences between position grade (group) and employees' OCB
- H5** : There is significant differences between employment status and employees' OCB

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework for the current study which was constructed based on the previous studies that focused on the demographic variables and employees' OCB. The employment status variable also involves in this study, with concern to the organization's practices.

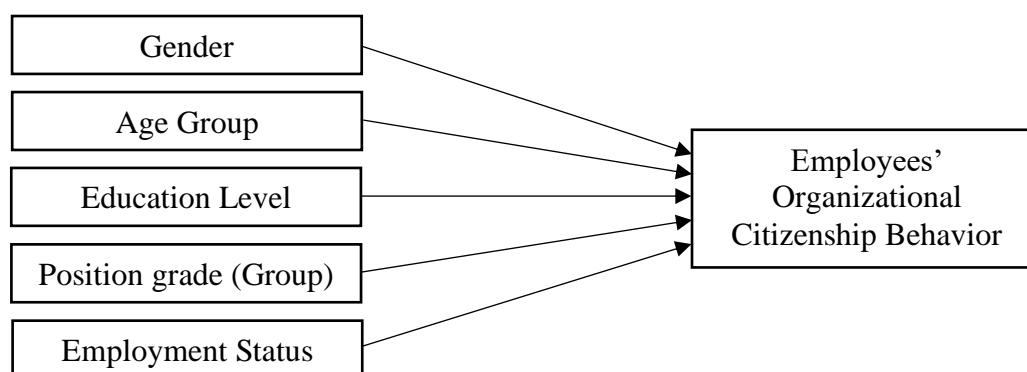


Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework

3. Methodology

This is a cross sectional study that investigate the OCB practices among employees by demographic variables. A structured questionnaire was used and designed by adopting the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) Scale by Podsakoff and Mackenzie (1994). The measurement contains 20 items that focused on the altruism, sportsmanship, civic-virtue, courtesy and conscientiousness. A total of 227 employees participated in this study involving academicians and non-academicians in one of academic institutions in Malaysia. All items in demographic profile of respondents were developed based on previous related studies and also the organization's setting. Meanwhile, all items of OCB were measured by using nominal scale where the respondents need to respond either they agree or disagree on the given statements.

4. Conclusion

A chi-square test for independence was computed to determine whether organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) practices is independent of gender (male and female). The result indicated there is no significant difference between male and female employees in practicing

the OCB, $\chi^2 (1) = .000$, $p = .992$. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is not supported and it concluded that OCB practices is not related to gender. Besides, in terms of age group, it showed that the OCB practices are not dependent on the employees' age as the result shows there is no significant difference between employees' age group and OCB practices, $\chi^2 (4) = 8.558$, $p = .073$. This concluded that Hypothesis 2 is not supported. In regards to education level, the same result showed. There is no significant difference between education level and OCB practices among employees, $\chi^2 (6) = 8.875$, $p = .181$. This explains the OCB practices among employees is not dependent on education level. Thus, Hypothesis 3 is not supported. The result also showed that OCB practices is independent of position grade (academic, executive and support), $\chi^2 (2) = .064$, $p = .969$. It concluded that Hypothesis 4 is not supported. The last demographic variable, employment status is added based on the organizational setting. Chi-square test result indicates that OCB practices among employees is dependent of their employment status (permanent, contract and temporary). Hence, Hypothesis 5 is supported with $\chi^2 (1) = 6.718$, $p = .010$.

Some of the findings in this study appear to be consistent with findings from the previous studies. In regards to gender, result from the current study shows that OCB practices are not dependent to male or female employees. Abdullah and Mohd Kamil (2020) and Dirican and Erdil (2016) also revealed no significant difference between gender and OCB practices. Besides, the result also revealed that OCB practices among employees are not dependent of younger or older employees and their education level as well. These results verify the findings by Abdullah and Mohd Kamil (2020) where there is no significant differences between age group and OCB, and education level and OCB. OCB practices among employees also turn not be independent of position grade as the result shows no significant differences between variables. This however contradict with the findings by Dirican and Erdil (2016) where they found that employees in the higher ranking likely to be involved in OCB practices compared to lower level employees. As what has been presented by cross tabulations result in the current study (Table 2), majority of employees in all position grades are likely to contribute to OCB practices which explains the reason of this independent relationship.

The only demographic variable that shows significant difference to OCB practices is employment status which refers to permanent, contract and temporary employees. Employees with permanent status are likely to involve more in OCB practices compared to employees with contract and temporary status. This shows that job security plays important role in shaping the employees behavior. Employees who feel secure in the organization will contribute to more OCB practices (Lam, Liang, Ashford, & Lee, 2015). As the employees feel appreciated by the organizations, they will feel the need to give in return by conducting and performing task beyond their formal responsibilities. However, when they feel insecure, the opposite event may happen. They will have less conducts to OCB and lower their motivation as well as performance.

The results of this study reveal that OCB practices among employees in academic institutions are dependent to the employment status, not gender, age group, education level and position grade. Hence, it is suggested that organization should pay more attention to employees' employment status. Permanent status employees will feel they are linked to the organization and this will influence them to have more involvement in positive conducts. Besides, since this study only highlights the association between demographic variable and OCB practices, it is suggested to the future study to have more variables as mediating or moderating the relationship between current variables under study.

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