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The relationship between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behavior

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behavior. The population consisted of all staff of Islamic Azad University, Tehran Science & Research Branch. To collect data, Podsakoff &Net.mier's (1990) questionnaire of OCB and Beugre's (1998) questionnaire of organizational justice were used. To determine its reliability, Cronbach-alpha was used (OCB questionnaire 0.85 and organizational trust questionnaire 0.87). The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics indices and inferential statistics after collecting. The results showed that mean of OCB are slightly more than average. And there is significant positive relationship between the components of organizational justice (distributive, procedural, and interactional justices as predicative variables) and OCB.

Keywords: organizational justice (Distributive, Procedural, and Interactional Justice), organizational citizenship behaviour

1. Introduction

Organizations are the most essential elements of a society which play an important role in human life. Human resources are the most strategic asset of an organization. In new approach of management and organizational behaviour, responsible, committed, brave, and wise workers are considered one of the most basic factors of organization's success. In the area of organizational behaviour, individual behaviour in workplace and behaviours like assisting other employees are very important; one of these behaviours is organizational citizenship behaviour. Organizational citizenship behaviour was firstly stated as extra-role behaviours in 1987 by Kan & Katz. But the main investigations on this concept have been introduced since 24 years ago; that is, it really started when Organ & et al (2006) firstly introduced it as "organizational citizenship behaviour". Since then, many studies on this subject, OCB and its influence on various factors, have been conducted, the most important of which can be pointed to as researches of Nielsen & et all's (2009), Eric & et all's (2008), and Deluga's (1994) that have been used as references for consequents investigations. During these years, all done researches have reached this consensus that OCB has

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entailed outstanding results for organizational jobs. From the view pint of organization, OCB is self-motivated and aware that is not directly or explicitly predicted by formal incentive system of organization; but in general, promotes organizational function. What we mean by self-motivated and aware is that this certain behaviour is not necessarily a role or a job agendum, rather, it is a personal choice that is not to be done, and no punishment is entailed to it (McAllister, 1995). OCB includes five components of sportsmanship, conscientiousness, altruism, courtesy, and civic virtue.

Blakely et al. (2005), in a research done in different organizations, found that when employees have a positive perception of their superior's fair behaviour, the possibility of OCB increases. Moorman's (1991) research on organizational justice and OCB reveals a casual relationship between these two. Based on a research done by Eric et al. (2008), they concluded that inferiors, who have a higher perception of organizational justice, show a greater tendency to involve and participate in OCB. Moreover, they found out that such inferiors avoid anti-social behaviours. Considering employees' positive working viewpoints and the share they can carry on beyond their determined duties and roles is considered one of the most significant competitive merits in organizations. In other words, behaviours that have gone beyond the formal expectations of the role and are important and necessary to survive organization are defined as OCB.

Moreover, studying of organizational justice is done for three important reasons: justice is a social phenomenon and includes aspects of social or organizational life. The most important asset of each organization is its human resource. How to behave and treat them will affect their future attitudes and behaviours.

Gradually, organizations are going to be encountered with an educated labour force. The higher they are educated and the better they are skilled, the better jobs they are not only searching for, but also are expecting to be considered more respected and treated more politely. Considering the complexity, vastness and variety of the activities in today organizations especially, educational and academic organizations, the activities beyond one's formal committed duties and responsibilities are necessary. This research aims to determine if organizational justice causes citizenship behaviour of organization's staff increase and how to promote OCB in a university, so to raise the organization's function through this process. The questions that are planned in this research are as follows:

Are there any significant relationships between organizational justice and OCB?

Are there any significant relationships between organizational justice (distributive, procedural, and interactional) and OCB?

Are there any meaningful correlations among the staff's level of perceived organizational justice in terms of demographic features (age, gender, education, record)?

Are there any meaningful correlations among the staff's OCB level of in terms of demographic features (age, gender, education, work experience)?

Methodology

This study aimed to explore the relationship between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behaviour. The data was collected from 250 randomly selected employees of Islamic Azad University, Tehran Science & Research Branch through two questionnaire: organizational justice (Beugre, 1998) containing 21 questions based on three components of distributive, procedural, and interactional justice and organizational citizenship behaviour (Podsakoff &et al. 2006) containing 12 questions, which was according to 5 points Likert scale (from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree.).

Content validity of the questionnaires was approved by expert judgement while its face validity was tested by pre-test of questionnaires. To determine their reliability, Cronbach-alpha calculation was used (organizational justice questionnaire 0.87 and organizational trust 0.85). Collected data was analyzed applying descriptive statistics indices and inferential statistics (such as: one-sample t-test to indicate frequency distribution of data, Chi-square to examine the systematic correlation between the two variables, Pearson correlation coefficient to calculate the correlation size between two variables, gamma correlation intensity test to indicate the intensity of correlation of determined variables in the two-dimension table, multivariable regression) through SPSS software.

Findings

Findings indicated that when there is more favourable perception toward organizational justice, higher organizational citizenship behaviour is generated. Other variables, whose relations with OCB are examined, are

demographic variables. The results showed that age and level of education have no correlations with organizational citizenship behaviour. The results tell us that the longer the people have work experience in an organization, the more and better OCB they show. Moreover, there is no difference between meeting the requirements of OCB by men or women. Generally, the results showed that the staff's OCB is affected by their perception of organizational justice. Individual and demographic variables have no great influence over organizational citizenship behaviour. The results showed that the perception of interactional justice is not at a relatively desired level in universities; in other words, this means the size of effectiveness of interactional justice on the staff's OCB is very low. The findings related to relationship between each of the components of organizational justice and organizational citizenship behaviour, showed that procedural organizational justice includes two structural (formal procedural features) and interpersonal (the way to treat people when enforcing procedures) dimensions. This study emphasizes on both dimensions of procedural justice to predict various aspects of organizational citizenship behaviour, but it has not been clearly indicated that which of these two dimensions (interpersonal or interpersonal) a better predictor is. Finally, the research findings suggest that procedural justice has a meaningful correlation with OCB. The results yielded from the correlation of demographic features with organizational justice indicate that there is no difference between men or women's perception of justice. The results suggest that there is a weak but positive relationship between perceived organizational justices and employees' work experience; in other words, the longer the employees work in an organization, the more favourable they perceived organizational justice.

Table 1- a summary of the results of the relations among research variables

Cases	P.Value	x^2	Strongly correlated
Justice organization & OCB	0.039	10.083	0.389
Age & justice organization	0.035	13.566	0.278
Gender & justice organization	0.827	0.381	0.04
Education & justice organization	0.84	1.627	0.07
Work history & justice organization	0.012	16.452	0.149
Age & OCB	0.0425	5.984	-0.10
Gender & OCB	0.742	0.597	0.05
Education & OCB	0.458	3.635	0.090
Work history & OCB	0.05	11.820	0.230
Distributive justice & OCB	0.04	11.820	0.120
Procedural justice& OCB	0.03	7.626	0.22
Interactional justice & OCB	0.03	6.586	0.24

Table 2- Pearson correlative matrix among research variables

Variable	OCB	Distributive justice	Procedural justice	Interaction justice
OCB (Sig)	1 0.000			
Distributive justice (Sig)	0.19 0.000	1 0.000		
Procedural justice (Sig)	0.23 0.000	0.46 0.000	1 0.000	
Interaction justice (Sig)	0.247 0.000	0.29 0.000	0.42 0.000	1 0.000

Table 3- statistical indicators, size and direction of the effect of each of the independent variables on citizenship behaviour

Statistical indicators	Regression coefficients	Standard error	Standardized beta	t	Significant level
Constant factor	19.737	3.912	-	5.046	0.000
Distributive justice	0.073	0.091	0.57	0.808	0.042
Procedural justice	0.214	0.156	0.099	1.376	0.017
Interaction justice	0.218	0.141	0.109	1.549	0.0123

2. Conclusion

The obtained findings related to the relation of OCB with organizational justice have established a considerable relationship in the mentioned statistical samples and when employees have a good perception of organizational justice, they have a greater tendency toward involving and participating in showing organizational citizenship behaviour. This latter finding is in consistence with Erick, *et al.*'s (2008); Blakely, *et al.*'s (2005); Moorman (1991); Moorman, *et al.*'s (1998), Skarlicki *et al.*'s (1997); and Farh, *et al.*'s (1997) researched findings.

Other variables whose relationships with OCB are dealt with in this research are demographic variables (age, gender, education, and …). The results showed that the university staff's organizational citizenship behaviours are not so affected by these variables. Various levels of education and different ages have no influence in expressing citizenship behaviour while the longer job record of the staff makes citizenship behaviour expressing higher.

In the present research, age and education have no relation with OCB that is compatible with Nielsen *et al.*'s (2009) findings. The results show that this statement "the longer the employee's job record is, the less s/he will meet the requirements of citizenship behaviour" is not in the same direction. It seems that lack of relation between these two variables is due to monotonousness/ repetitiveness and lack of motivations in the job of the staff. In addition, the research findings indicate that considering OCB by men or women makes no difference that is not in the same direction with the researchers' results. This issue can be due to cultural enrichment of Iranian organizations. Generally, the results suggest that the staff's citizenship behaviour is much more influenced by perception of justice and trust and the individual and demographic variables have a weak effect on citizenship behaviour.

The results yielded from tests show that that the level of perception of interactional justice in universities is not at a relatively desired level; in other words, this means the size of effectiveness of interactional justice on the staff's OCB is too low. And this result is slightly different from other researchers' findings, e.g. Pastore, *et al.*'s (2003); - Moorman, *et al.*'s (1998); Cohen, *et al.*'s (2001); Coob, *et al.*'s (1997); and Robin, *et al.*'s (2009). It seems the reason for the high level of OCB of the staffs is the governing socio-cultural and religious norms in Iran.

The findings gained from the relationship of each of the components of organizational justice with OCB show that procedural justice includes two structural and interpersonal dimensions (how to treat individuals when enforcing procedures). This study has an emphasis on the ability of both dimensions of procedural justice to foresee various aspects of organizational citizenship behaviour, but it has not been cleared that which of these two dimension; structural or interpersonal, a better predictor is. The findings from the present study suggest that procedural justice has a meaningful correlation with organizational citizenship behaviour, which is in agreement with Cropanzano's (2007) studies and indicates a relationship between OCB and structural and interpersonal dimensions of procedural justice.

The obtained results from the relationship demographic features with organizational justice reveal that there cannot be found any relationship between men or women perception of justice. This latter finding is disagreement with Rubin's (2009) research results. It seems the reason for this is a fair atmosphere governing among men and women working in the university.

In addition, the relationship between feature of job record and sense of justice was examined that showed a weak relationship between them. While the results of Bies's (2005) research indicate that people entering organization have got negative attitude and expected injustices; having paid attention to the organization, they will find its fair atmosphere. Regarding the discussed issues, it can be concluded that one of the effective factors influencing OCB is organizational justice. In such a way that the higher the perception of justice is in organization, the greater OCB will be expressed since the relations among individuals is friendly and based on mutual respectability. Organizational justice has three components including distributive, procedural, and interactional justices. Interactional justice shows interactions among the staff and their inferiors, bosses and colleagues in an organization, which has a higher relationship than the other two components with citizenship behaviour; which indicates that the more the interactions between superior and inferiors there are, the better they consider citizenship behaviour's requirements. Among other components of organizational justice is procedural justice that indicates how people deal with the complaints and conflicts and how the incomes are distributed among beneficiaries. This component also has a relationship with OCB that suggests "the higher people perceive procedural justice, the higher they express OCB". In other meanings, when people are satisfied with their incomes, the will show more citizenship behaviour. Distributive justice component has shown a weak, but positive relationship with citizenship behaviour. It means that

the higher people get incentives and awards, the more they show OCB consideration. Among other examined variables, demographic variables can be mentioned including age, gender, education, work experience. There is no difference between various age categories, between men and women, as well as between educational levels from the viewpoint of organizational citizenship behaviour. But the longer one's work experience is, s/he demonstrates lower citizenship behaviour. Demographical and organizational justice variables were examined, too, and the obtained results show that the older the staffs are in an organization, the higher they perceived justice; and also, there is no difference between gender and educational levels and organizational justice. But the longer work experiences require people to have a higher perception of justice.

As improvement of OCB is vital in this competitive age and basically determines employees' readiness to voluntary efforts, it is necessary for administrators to take appropriate action:

• Being concerned about the welfare of employee and show support, consideration, and helpfulness
• More attention should be paid to the process of distribution of outcomes and rewards
• Consistent and fair procedures regarding employment, promotion and performance assessment should be developed.
• With a high quality of interpersonal interaction in the workplace, employees　elicit the extra-role behavior, organizations should foster the development of close relationship between supervisor and their subordinates
• Free flow of information, trust to employees, open and two ways communication is important to improve interactional justice

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