

A conceptual framework on Ontologies and Antecedents of Organizational Citizenship Behavior

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Abstract:

Organizational Commitment in the workplace is a crucial one for the success of a business concern. This commitment could be enhanced more by exhibiting Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB).The concept of OCB has received much attention in the past decade as scholars have recognized its significant impact on the success of organizations. Organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) describe actions in which employees are willing to go above and beyond their prescribed role requirements. The current study seeks to enrich our understanding of citizenship behavior by identifying the major ontologies and that may enhance this behavior among teachers. This study integrates the literature of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) on the antecedents and the ontologies of OCB.

Key Words: Ontologies, antecedents and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB).

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Introduction:

Changes in organizational environments are inevitable in today's world and their ensuing innovations and flexibility necessarily calls for voluntary behavior from members of an organization. Individual initiative and team work is needed in this regard. Hence an organization must be capable of shifting its members' attitudes and behaviors to pursue their own desires, values, preferences and aspirations vicariously. The voluntary behavior termed as **Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)** could be the best solution to the organizations in this regard.

Originally, experts in the field of management focused only on activities that directly supported the output of the organization. As the job market became more aggressive, it became necessary for employees to go above and beyond that which is formally required by the job description in order to remain competitive.

The effective functioning of an organization depends on employee efforts that extend beyond formal role requirements (Barnard, 1938; Katz & Kahn, 1966; Organ,1988).Organ (1988) termed these extra efforts as “organizational citizenship behaviors” (OCB), and defined them to include activities that target other individuals in the workplace (e.g., helping coworkers or communicating changes that affect others) and the organization itself (e.g., actively participating

in group meetings or representing the organization positively to outsiders). Organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) describe actions in which employees are willing to go above and beyond their prescribed role requirements. Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is a unique aspect of individual activity at work, first mentioned in the early 1980s. Over the past three decades, interest in these behaviors has increased substantially.

Organizational citizen:

Organizational citizen is a person who exhibits discretionary behaviors beyond its role, duties and official job description. An organizational citizen is not seeking rewards from the organization for his discretionary behaviors. In fact, his behavior roots in his job devotion on the belief that his discretionary behavior will be helpful for the organization progress. Therefore, he makes additional attempts for improvement and advancement of the organization. Earlier researches in OCB are mostly conducted to identify employees' responsibilities and/or behaviors in organization that was often overlooked. Although the measurements of these behaviors were incomplete in traditional job performance evaluations and even sometimes were overlooked, but they were helpful in improving organizational effectiveness.

Ontologies of OCB:

While there is total agreement on the existence of OCB, there is much less convergence on the theoretical underpinnings of these desired behaviors. OCB was the proposed construct coined by Organ (1977) during his initial attempt to understand these as-yet-unnamed behaviors as a better representation of "performance" in the "satisfaction-causes-performance" controversy. Dennis Organ defines OCB as actions in which employees are willing to go above and beyond their prescribed role requirements. Dennis Organ is generally considered the father of OCB. Organ expanded upon Katz's original work. Organ (1988) defines OCB as "individual behavior 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.

Van Dyne et al., (1995) views OCB as "affiliative and promotive" behaviors that demonstrate the actor's desire to maintain a relationship with the target (i.e., coworkers or the organization) and contribute to the target's success. A few other experts portray OCB as socially desirable behaviors. Walz and Niehoff (1996) in his study expresses that OCB represents a set of desirable organizational behaviors, which demonstrate multi-dimensional relationships with positive organizational consequences.

Borman and Motowidlo (1993,1997) brings in the concept called 'contextual performance' related to OCB that contribute to the effectiveness of the organization by shaping the organizational, social, and psychological context that serves as the catalyst for task activities and processes. As opposed to "task performance" (i.e. the effectiveness with which job incumbents perform activities that contribute to the organization's technical core) by "contextual

performance” these authors refers to those behaviors that employees engage in many work behaviors that fall outside the rubric of task performance. Their taxonomy of contextual performance includes persisting with enthusiasm and extra effort as necessary to complete own task activities successfully, volunteering to carry out task activities that are not formally part of own job, helping and cooperating with others, following organizational rules and procedures, and endorsing, supporting, and defending organizational objectives.

Another definition of OCB comes from Van Dyne et al. (1995) who proposes the broader construct of "extra-role behavior" (ERB), defined as "behavior which benefits the organization and/or is intended to benefit the organization, which is discretionary and which goes beyond existing role expectations"

Van-Scotter and Motowidlo (1996) suggests that contextual performance should be separated into the two narrower constructs of “interpersonal facilitation” and “job dedication,” which are similar to Organ’s interpersonally directed and organizationally-directed factors respectively.

Antecedents of OCB:

Determining why individuals engage in OCBs has occupied a substantial amount of research attention in both organizational behavior and social psychology (Brief and Motowidlo, 1986; McNeely and Meglino, 1994).A conceptually sound framework for understanding why OCB occurs seems to be missing. Historically, each new study suggested, and to an extent found support for, a new antecedent of OCB. But it is evident that a convergence for coherence in the conceptual underpinnings of OCB is literally missing. It is argued here that this lack of convergence in the search for antecedents is not due to any measurement issues; rather OCB has been primarily studied as an impetus for better organizational performance along with other commonly recognized organizational variables.

Antecedents to OCB are the factors that enhance or impede the level of employees’ performance in an organization. Apart from the traditional measures of employee productivity, it is important to monitor that set of work behaviors that goes beyond the role description but also are important contributors to the effectiveness of the organization. Like most behaviors, OCB are also subject to multiple antecedents. That is, there is no single cause of OCB. Therefore, it makes sense that applying the same rationale to OCB. It is hoped that testing these suggested antecedents in different organizational context will help to enrich the understanding of how various work conditions affect an employee’s willingness to engage in OCB. When the antecedents of this particular class of behaviors are better understood, employees would be more effective to cultivate the OCB among their co- workers in the organization. The empirical studies conducted by Cardona, Lawrence, & Bentler, 2004 Hodson, 2002) suggests that there is a positive relationship between OCB and the performance of the organization .

The accepted theoretical approach to explaining why individuals tend to exhibit OCBs is social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which contends that individuals will attempt to reciprocate those who benefit them. Recent literature (e.g. Podsakoff et al., 2000; Tepper and Taylor, 2003) suggests that employees perform OCBs with greater frequency when they perceive as fair the means by which organizations and their representatives make allocation decisions (i.e. procedural justice). According to Organ (1988), employees interpret procedural fairness to mean that their employer can be trusted to protect their interests; this in turn, engenders an obligation to repay their employer through OCBs. One of the most important conditions that shape employees' views about procedural fairness is PDM (Porter et al., 1996; VanYperen et al., 1999), sometimes referred to as the process control effect (Thibaut and Walker, 1975) or the voice effect (Tyler and Lind, 1992). In general, PDM is defined as joint decision making or at least shared influence in decision making by a superior and his or her employee (Koopman and Wierdsma, 1998). Theoretically, PDM is linked to OCB in a number of ways.

Khan Muhammad Aslam et.al (2010) tries to find out relationship between antecedents of organizational citizenship behavior and organizations performance in Pakistan. Organizational citizenship behavior is composed of three components: civic virtue, altruism and conscientiousness. Results prove that organizational citizenship behavior antecedents have positive relationship with Organizations performance. This study shows that organizations working in Pakistan must adapt these three antecedents of organizational citizenship behavior to improve organizations performance. Employees discharging their functions selflessly and with great devotion would harmonize their work and discharge their function in team concept. Organization would be considered as part of their personality and its growth would yield benefit not to the individual but a collective cause of an organization.

Podsakoff et.al, (2000) brings out that a wide range of employee, task, organizational and leader characteristics are consistently found to predict different types of OCB across a range of occupations.

Conclusion:

This study demonstrate that organizational characteristics play a significant role in promoting OCB which implies that OCB, like other organizational behaviors, can be viewed as a context-related phenomenon in that it is really interactive or “social” in nature. Therefore, this paper serves to encourage OCB researchers to focus more attention on characteristics of organizational context as related to OCB. Therefore, behaviors that go beyond in-role duties become a fundamental component for achieving effectiveness in organizations.

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