

The Level of Understanding on the Importance of Organizational Citizenship Behavior among Students in a Malaysian Public University

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Abstract: The main purpose of this paper is to determine the level of understanding on the importance of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) among the students in the chosen public university. Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is a human working behavior that has positive effects toward the organization. The selected university for the study is Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), Kedah. Therefore, it is crucial to know how well-versed the students of UUM on the importance of the human behavior studies, as UUM is known as one of the management university in Malaysia. From results obtained, only 201 respondents who completed the questionnaire that was given to them. Overall, the students of UUM have a good understanding on the importance of Organizational Citizenship Behavior and its dimensions, towards the organization.

Key words: Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) • Human work behavior • Cooperation

INTRODUCTION

The knowledge of human behavior is crucial for all managers, regardless whether it is a public organization or private organization. Knowing and understanding what the employees needs are the fundamental issue that every organization must know and tackle in order to ensure that they are satisfied and willingly to work for the organization, as it will give positive impacts to the organizational performance [1, 2].

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is the work behavior that has positive impacts towards the performance of the organization. Organizational Citizenship Behavior can easily be understood as various forms of cooperation and helpfulness to others that support the organizational social and psychological context [3].

Organizations excel when their employees are willingly to do more than what they are supposed to do, whether it is directed towards individuals or towards the organization [4]. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to determine the level of understanding of the students in Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) on the importance of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) towards the organizations.

Literature Review: Argentero, Cortese and Ferretti [5] had traced back to the work of Barnard [6], whom realized that the willingness of the employees to commit oneself to the organization is a key factor to the organization, in order to achieve its organizational goals. Thus, Barnand [6] proposed the concept of “willingness to cooperate”, this concept was said to be contradicted with the classic management theory, whereby the individuals’ behavior is the main factor of the efficient management and encouraged organizational performance, but it was the individual’s attitudes towards the organization, such as loyalty, solidarity and group spirit.

The concept of “willingness to cooperate” was later been further discussed by Katz [7] and Katz and Kahn [8] by differing the behaviors between “in-role behavior” and “extra-role behavior”. In-role behavior (IRB) is the behaviors within the job or task of the individual, whereas extra-role behavior (ERB) is the behaviors that act done beyond the job or task of the individual. Through the work of Katz [7] and Katz and Kahn [8] came to the interest of Bateman and Organ [9], which then conducted an empirical research on the behaviors of the employees, then introduced the concept of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), as well as its positive impacts to the organizational performance.

Thus, Organ ([10] p.4) defined Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) as “an 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.” Thus, it implies that OCB is an act out of the job or task responsibilities of an individual, but merely done as an act of help towards others, without any intention of receiving any credits or bonus pay.

Thus, OCB can be display in certain situation, as the act which; it is not in or apart of job description; the help given was spontaneous; no bonus pay received by helping others; and aid that contributed in a little way to the operation of the group, as well as the performance of organization [10].

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is known as a science that studies human behavior in an organization and how these behaviors affect their organization. OCBs are also be meant as intentional employees behaviors that are discretionary and typically not recognized or rewarded, but nonetheless improve the functioning of the organization, for instance, exceeding the role expectations in attendance and work; and helping others with their job [3]

Dennis W. Organ [10] had written a book titled “Organizational Citizenship Behavior, highlighting on the definition of OCB, its main dimensions and the importance of such work behavior for organizations.

Organ [10] outlined the five dimensions of OCB; altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy and civic virtue. The first dimension is altruism; it is a voluntary behavior where an employee provides assistance to an individual with a particular problem to complete his task under unusual circumstances [11]. The second dimension is the conscientiousness; it is a part of behavior that refers to self-disciplined, carefulness, deliberation and the need of achievement. Next, the sportsmanship refers to willingness to tolerate less than the ideal circumstances without any complaint being made [12].

On the other hand, courtesy is a part of behavior that focuses on prevention of problems and taking steps to lessen the effects of the problem. This kind of behavior would reduce intergroup conflict and reduce time spent on managing conflict [13]. Last but not least, civic virtue refers to the responsible participation in the organization. Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine and Bachrach [14] found that such behavior reflects employee recognition of being part of the organization.

These elements of Organizational Citizenship Behavior are the positive working behavior reflected by the employees when they are committed and loyal towards the organization. These behaviors give positive result, not only to the employees’ performance, but also the organizational performance in a long run period as well.

The study of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is a continuous study, which researchers never stop to investigate on its potential and various case studies had be done by the researchers over the years. Thus, multiple researchers had been exploring each of the dimensions of OCB as well as its effects toward the individuals and organizations.

Table 1: Classification of Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

Smith, Organ and Near [11]	Altruism Generalized Compliance
Organ [10]	Altruism Conscientiousness Sportsmanship Courtesy Civic Virtue
William and Anderson [15]	OCBs directed toward individuals OCBs directed toward the organizations
Van Dyne, Graham and Dienesch [16]	Social Participation Loyalty Obedience Functional Participation
Morrison [17]	Altruism Conscientiousness Sportsmanship Involvement Keeping up with Changes
Van Scotter and Motowidlo [18]	Interpersonal Facilitation Job Dedication
Coleman and Borman [18]	Interpersonal Citizenship Performance Organizational Citizenship Performance Job Task Citizenship Performance

Source: Argentero, Cortese and Ferretti [5]

Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) is known as the management university in Malaysia. It was first established on 19th February, 1984, as the sixth public university in Malaysia. It was solely set up for the management education from its very first establishment. Thus, most of the courses offered in UUM are management-related courses, such as managerial decision-making, tourism management, public management, as well as business management.

Most of the students in UUM were undergraduate students, which taking the First Degree and also the postgraduate students, which for Second Degree and Ph.D. Therefore, most of the students were well-versed with management theories and human behavior studies, as it is a part of the social sciences field.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is design to study the level of importance of Organizational Citizenship Behavior based on the students' view; therefore the data collected were using the personally administered questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to the students, regardless of their level of studies (undergraduates or postgraduates) and courses they taken in the university. 201 of questionnaires were successfully retrieved, out of 210 questionnaires that had been distributed to the students in UUM. The data collected was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.

The instruments used are adapted from William & Anderson [15] and Fox, Spector, Goh, Bruursema and Kessler [20], which comprised of 12-items to measure the importance of each elements of Organizational Citizenship Behavior towards the organizations. The Likert Scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= neutral; 4= agree; and 5= strongly agree, was employed in this research to measure the level of the understanding of the students in this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research received 95.7% response rate by the students in UUM. The frequencies of the respondents' age were 7.5% (18-20), 58.7% (21-25), 19.9% (26-30), 6.5% (31-35), 4.5% (36-40), 2.0% (41-45), 0.5% (46-50) and 0.5% (51-55). Most of the respondents were female students, with the frequency of 58.7%, while the frequency for the male students was 41.3%. The highest frequency for the highest academic qualification was Degree, with 47.3%. The second highest frequency was the Master, with 34.8%, while the frequency for the Ph.D was 10.4%. Both STPM and Diploma were at the frequency of 4.5% and 3.0% respectively. The profile of the respondents is presented in Table 2.

Table 3 below indicated the mean and standard deviations of the Organizational Citizenship Behavior scale. Four categories had been described based on the rank of importance: mean value of 2.59 and below

Table 2: The Profile of the Respondents

Respondents' Profile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	18-20	7.5
	21-25	58.7
	26-30	19.9
	31-35	6.5
	36-40	4.5
	41-45	2.0
	46-50	0.5
	51-55	0.5
Gender	Male	41.3
	Female	58.7
Highest Academic Qualification	STPM	4.5
	Diploma	3.0
	Degree	47.3
	Master	34.8
	PH.D	10.4

indicated as less understanding, mean value between 2.60 to 3.40 indicated as moderate understanding, mean value from 3.41 to 4.20 indicated as high understanding and lastly the mean value of 4.21 and above indicated as great understanding.

Thus, based on the findings, the mean values were ranging from 3.80 up to 4.20 only, which mean that all the items were categorized as high understanding and great understanding. The items scored with the mean values ranging from 3.41 to 4.20 are; *I think that workers will ensure to engage in activities that will directly affect their performance; I assumed that workers will help their colleague who has been absent; I believed that workers will help to assist supervisor with his/her work; Attendance at work is above norm; I assumed that workers do take undeserved work breaks; I assumed that workers will give advance notice when unable to come to work; I think that workers spent most of their time with personal phone conversations; I think that workers like to complaint about insignificant things at work; I believed that workers conserve and protect organizational property; I assumed that workers will help their colleagues to learn new skill or shared knowledge; I believed that workers will offered suggestions to improve the task done and working environment.*

There was only 1 item that its mean value ranged up to 4.2488, which was; *I believed that workers will adequately complete the assigned duties if they feel that they are a part of the organization.*

From the findings, it showed that the students have a high understanding on the importance of the dimensions in Organizational Citizenship Behavior towards organizations. The mean values ranged from

Table 3: The Descriptive Statistics of Organizational Citizenship Behavior

	Means	SD
I believed that workers will adequately complete the assigned duties if they feel that they are a part of the organization.	4.2488	0.82329
I think that workers will ensure to engage in activities that will directly affect their performance.	4.0846	0.78601
I assumed that workers will help their colleague who has been absent.	3.4328	0.99836
I believed that workers will help to assist supervisor with his/her work.	3.8408	0.79027
Attendance at work is above norm	4.1343	0.92567
I assumed that workers do take undeserved work breaks.	3.9204	0.74406
I assumed that workers will give advance notice when unable to come to work.	3.8408	0.95107
I think that workers spent most of their time with personal phone conversations	3.8557	0.71699
I think that workers like to complaint about insignificant things at work.	3.8209	0.64634
I believed that workers conserve and protect organizational property.	3.8209	2.26446
I assumed that workers will help their colleagues to learn new skill or shared knowledge.	3.8408	0.82736
I believed that workers will offered suggestions to improve the task done and working environment	3.9453	0.83785

3.4328 up to 4.2488; which are high understanding and great understanding. Thus, the variability of the rating of the standard deviations of each items are relatively high as well, from 0.64634 to 2.26446, which indicated the inconsistencies on the level of understanding on the importance Organizational Citizenship Behavior from the respondents.

Therefore based on the findings, there is a high value of mean of the students in UUM. Hence, from the score of the each items, it resulted that there is a high mean concentration on the understanding of the importance of Organizational Citizenship Behavior. However, the value of the mean was higher on the high understanding, not great understanding, therefore, it can be implied that not all students were fully understood on the importance of the Organizational Citizenship Behavior toward organizations. There is also inconsistencies in the standard deviation for one item, which was "*I believed that workers conserve and protect organizational property*" at 2.26446, thus it implied that this item was not really relevant to the study as well.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result obtained above, it indicated that there is a relatively high mean value in the level of importance of Organizational Citizenship Behavior from the students' view. UUM is known as one of the best management university in Malaysia; therefore, through the results obtained from the students, as general, it can be concluded that the students have a general knowledge on the importance of the Organizational Citizenship Behavior and its dimensions as well. Though, some students do not really understand the importance of the dimensions of Organizational Citizenship Behavior to the organization, but they do know the importance of the values, loyalty and commitment of an employee toward the organization.

It is suggested that future researches should be done towards the employees and the managers in the organization, as to see the relevancy of the Organizational Citizenship Behavior and its dimensions. Moreover, each dimension of the Organizational Citizenship has its own positive impacts to the organization, thus, it is advisable to the future researchers to extent this research to study the impacts of each OCB's dimensions to the organization as well.

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