

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES AND JOB ATTITUDES IN THE FUNCTION OF INCREASING ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR (OCB): A CASE STUDY

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Abstract This paper analyzes the link between individual differences and job attitudes with organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) that contributes to the increasing success of the organization. Employees who have more experience helping new employees contribute to increasing their productivity, thus increasing the overall efficiency of the workgroup. The paper also presents research results from Croatia's selected company that deals with the hospitality industry, where semi-structured interviews consisting of 16 questions were conducted with the respondents. The questions were thematically related to respondents' knowledge and attitudes about OCB in general, then to respondents' experiences and attitudes about the impact of individual characteristics and attitudes towards work on OCB practice and employees' attitudes about the impact of OCB on business performance. Research results indicate that employees practice the concept of OCB to a much greater extent than they theoretically understand it. In addition, the research results showed that not all individual differences and job attitudes are equally associated with OCB. Knowing how to increase the level of OCB in the company implies the increased business performance of the organization, which is why this paper has theoretical and practical importance in business.

Keywords:
individual differences,
job attitudes,
organizational citizenship behavior, business success, case study

JEL:
J24, M14

1 Introduction

Today's competitive work environment is increasingly demanding due to significant changes in technology and customer habits, substantial changes in the environment caused by global changes and relations between countries, and other disturbances such as the recent COVID-19 pandemic. In modern organizations, it is necessary to pay close attention to organizational members' spontaneous and cooperative behavior, particularly organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), as this can be the critical factor in gaining a competitive advantage (Mackenzie et al., 2011). Coldwell and Callaghan (2014) found that OCB plays a vital role in the development and success of organizations by initiating various workplace dynamics, promoting social connections in organizations, and influencing behaviors related to organizational functions and outcomes.

2 Theoretical Background

2.1 OCB model and its implications in business systems

Organ (1997:91) defined OCB as behavior that contributes "to the maintenance and enhancement of the social and psychological context that supports task performance". The three-dimensional OCB model proposed by Coleman and Borman (2000) consists of 27 dimensions shaped into an integrated OCB model. The model encompasses three broad dimensions that differ concerning which entity benefits from responsible employee behavior (Coleman and Borman, 2000):

1. ***Interpersonal citizenship performance*** refers to interpersonal conscientiousness in helping organizational members (suggestions, study, direct execution of tasks, providing emotional support, etc.).
2. ***Organizational citizenship performance*** contains the concepts of loyalty and satisfaction of the organization by accepting, supporting, and protecting the organization's goals, as well as following organizational rules and procedures.
3. ***Job/task citizenship performance*** refers to investing additional efforts to perform work tasks as successfully as possible, maximize employees' work performance, and develop personal knowledge and skills to increase personal productivity and commitment to work.

According to the theory of social exchange proposed by Blau (1964), employees reciprocate to the organization with OCB when they perceive that the organization treats them correctly (Cardona et al., 2004). Through the process of social exchange, employees spontaneously express OCB patterns due to job satisfaction, loyalty, trust in the organization, and perceptions of organizational fairness (Cho and Johanson 2008).

The basic definition of OCB suggests a positive correlation between OCB and organizational performance (Organ, 1988) by increasing employee and managerial productivity, which leads to increasing the overall efficiency of the workgroup, additional time for strategic planning, improving business processes, and freeing up organization resources for more productive purposes. Furthermore, coordination of activities between employees increases team spirit, morale, and cohesion, thus reducing the need to spend team members' time and energy on maintaining group functionality (Organ et al., 2005), but also by contributing to a comfortable work environment that raises morale, group cohesion, and a sense of belonging to a group (George & Bettenhausen, 1990). OCB also improves the organization's ability to adapt to environmental changes when employees actively monitor market trends (loyalty) and participate in meetings (civic virtue). Also, employees willing to take on new responsibilities or learn new skills show elements of cordiality, thereby increasing an organization's ability to adapt to changes in the market (Organ et al., 2005). Finally, employee OCB can improve organizational performance by creating different forms of organizational social capital by improving information transfer and performance (structural form), gaining useful knowledge by attending business meetings (cognitive form), and building mutual trust (relational form) (Bolino et al., 2002).

2.2 The impact of selected individual differences on OCB

Research has shown that biographical characteristics play a significant role in understanding workplace behavior (Wanxian & Weiwu, 2007). Age is the most apparent variable by which individuals differ, with older employees more likely to perceive OCB as behavior within a work role (Stroshine and Brandy, 2011). Seniority also has a positive effect on OCB, with the Hunt (2002) study finding that the relevant skills and competencies needed to do job growth with a longer stay of employees in the same organization. Some of the basic behaviors in the workplace

are proper business communication, self-awareness, and self-control of employees, which are influenced by emotions and moods or the emotional state of employees (Ekman, 1992). Organizations encourage organizational behavior aimed at helping and cooperating among employees as a determinant of OCB (Hudrea, 2006).

2.3 The impact of attitudes towards work on OCB

Job satisfaction affects employee productivity, absenteeism, employee turnover, and responsible organizational behavior (Coomber and Barriball, 2007). Research has shown that less satisfied workers are more likely to seek other jobs or reduce workplace engagement (Mirković, 2016).

Preoccupation with work can lead to positive outcomes such as commitment, care, attention, immersion, enthusiasm, self-image and self-esteem (Sharma et.al., 2012). However, the cause-and-effect relationship between preoccupation and activities and behaviors is unclear.

Organizational commitment is based on three factors: firm belief and acceptance of organizational goals and values, willingness to make significant efforts on behalf of the organization, and a strong desire to remain a member for as long as possible (Mowday et al., 1974). A 1977 study showed that commitment to an organization results in employee behavior not conditioned by penalties or rewards (Wiener, 1982).

Organizations provide employees with emotional and economic benefits to create a positive perception of support and respect, encouraging them to reciprocate by increasing their effort and commitment in the workplace and tasks not formally given job descriptions (Baran et.al., 2012).

Employee involvement is emotional and intellectual devotion to the organization or effort a person puts into work (Saks, 2006). Erickson (2008) found that engaged individuals have a high propensity for behaviors as defined in the literature by OCB.

3 Methodology

A survey was conducted to gather employees' experiences and attitudes about OCB in an organization that deals with the hospitality industry. The research aims to examine and analyze the construct of OCB on a deliberate sample and based on the elaboration of the relationship between the selected variables to determine the relationship between employee preferences of OCB with business performance.

The research is planned to answer the basic research questions:

- Are the employees of the selected business entity at all familiar with the concept of OCB?
- Do individual differences affect the employee's preference for OCB in the selected business entity?
- Does the attitude towards work affect the employee's preference for OCB in the selected business entity?
- Does the concept of OCB affect the performance of the chosen business system?

The research was conducted in a medium-sized catering facility from Varaždin County in Croatia on an illustrative sample of five employees who differ in their characteristics, job positions, and other characteristics. A semi-structured interview consisting of 16 questions was conducted with the respondents. The qualitative data analysis was conducted without computer software and identified open codes and categories that follow basic research questions using initial, focused, and axial coding and the method of grounded theory.

4 Results

Detailed analysis of respondents' answers regarding the concentration of knowledge versus the tendency to practice OCB revealed a higher tendency toward OCB in practice, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Results of the study of the difference in knowledge and practice of OCB

Examined area	Main findings		Explanation
Concentration of knowledge	Low concentration of knowledge		OCB → is not behavior within the work role
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Helping behavior, cordiality	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loyalty, adjustment to the organization	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Individual initiative, civic virtue, personal development	
Tendency to practice OCB	High tendency to practice OCB		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Helping behavior	Quality and timely performance of work tasks
		Loyalty	Pride, gladly sharing successes
		Adjustment to the organization	Compliance with rules at all times
		Personal development	Non-formal learning → improving skills and business processes
		Individual initiative	Enthusiasm in doing work, voluntary acceptance of responsibilities
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cordiality	Approaching problems calmly when being respected
		Civic virtue	Attending ineffective organizational meetings

Source: Authors' research

By analyzing the research results on the impact of individual differences on OCB, we identified three levels of impact: significant, medium, and low, which are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Research results on the relationship between individual differences and OCB

Variable	OCB indicator	Implication
Biographical characteristics		
Age	Reciprocity mechanism, decreased ability	Helping behavior
Length of service	Number of years in the same job	Organizational commitment
Sex	Gender characteristics	Stronger tendency of women to OCP
Personality	Comfort, conscientiousness, emotional stability	Helping behavior, kindness
Emotions and moods	-	No implication
Learning	Informal level	Helping behavior, cooperation

Source: Authors' research

The analysis of the research results on the impact of attitudes toward work on OCB found that job satisfaction affects work behavior, obsession with work affects OCB, commitment to the organization benefits OCB, employee engagement infuriates OCBs, and perceived organizational support has no impact on OCB.

From the collected answers from the respondents, we can conclude that OCB has numerous positive implications for business success, shown in Figure 1.

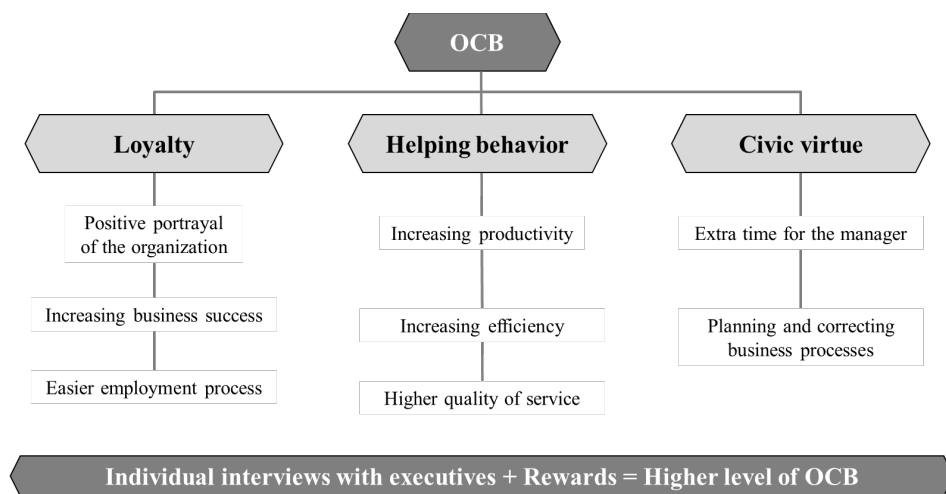


Figure 1: Research results on the relationship between OCB and business success

Source: Authors' research

5 Discussion and Conclusion

Although there are many types of research related to OCB, business practice shows that the application of OCB is still insufficiently applied. Therefore, the primary motive for this work was to promote the concept of OCB further and explore the extent to which this concept is recognized and used in concrete business practice.

There are some limitations regarding this research, primarily referring to a small research sample and the fact that research is conducted within one specific kind of company within a specific industry. Therefore, in future research, it would be reasonable to expand the sample to several organizations within culturally different regions to compare results and determine if there are significant differences.

The results of this article have scientific and practical applications. Given the growing demand for employees in service industries, especially in the hospitality industry, the results can be a guideline for conducting individual surveys of hospitality facilities to identify potential difficulties among current staff. Also, research results are helpful for managers because they indicate the diversity of employees concerning age, experience, personality, and attitudes towards work and can be guidelines for choosing educational programs or programs to strengthen team spirit in order to finally improve the behavior of their employees, and enhance effectiveness in general. Managers need to be aware of the diversity of employees to be able to affect behavior by implementing modern leadership strategies, while effective leadership can contribute to the development of greater OCB.

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