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Leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour: A Mantra to Success

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Abstract:

Booming organizations are a result of the workforce who go ahead of their formal job responsibilities. So, every organization is in constant search of tools by which they can increase the performance level of the employees. They seek methods to enhance the optimistic and constructive behaviour of the employees. It has been suggested by many research scholars who had highly contributed to this field that OCB is one of the most significant behaviours, and leaders can prove themselves as key factors to induce and influence these types of behaviours. The purpose of this research is to offer a framework to figure out the relationship between leadership and OCB. OCB can be defined as the positive and constructive behaviour shown by the employees willingly, going beyond the formal job requirements, which supports to enhance the overall performance of the organization. This research will try to explore how leaders influence OCB amongst team members.

Keywords: OCB, transformational leadership, transactional leadership

1. Introduction

Just as a country needs good citizens to flourish and develop, an organization also needs a set of citizens who have positive behaviour, who feel responsible, put extra effort, and have a sense of belongingness towards the organisation. Citizenship behaviour talks about the extra role behaviour exhibited by the employee voluntarily.

Over the past three decades, interest in behaviors that fit into the definition of OCB has increased dramatically. Several scholars have described many domains that possess similarity with the construct. This includes contextual performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993,1997; Borman, White & Dorsey 1995; Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994; Van Scotter & Motowidlo, 1996), Prosocial Organizational Behavior (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; George, 1990, 1991; George & Bettenhausen, 1990; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986), Extra Role Behavior (Van Dyne, Cummings, & Mc Lean Parks, 1995, Organ et. al 2006) and Organizational spontaneity (George & Brief,1992; George & Jones 1997).

Practitioners working in the area of OCB have always conceived that it consists of several behavioral dimensions. Smith, Organ and Near (1983) conducted a structured interview to predict behavioral dimensions of OCB and proposed a two dimensional model.

Five years later, Organ (1988) proposed a five-dimension model of Organizational citizenship behavior, which includes Altruism (taken in a narrow perspective as compared to Smith et al., 1983) and Generalized Compliance is broken into four other dimensions such as Courtesy, Conscientiousness, Civic Virtue, and Sportsmanship. Judgemental behaviours that employees demonstrate at their workplace, which aim to reduce the work conflicts were called Courtesy. This can be marked as helping behaviour that prevents problems from arising. It also exhibits consideration and politeness towards others. Conscientiousness consists of behaviours that go beyond the minimum role requirements. Employees abide by the rules, regulations and procedures of the organization. Civic Virtue is when an employee is deeply concerned and demonstrates active interest in the life of the organization. This talks about the positive involvement of the person with the organization. Sportsmanship is the willingness on the part of the employee that signifies the employee's tolerance of less than ideal organizational circumstances without complaining and blowing problems out of proportion. Organ & Ryan (1995) have proved that job satisfaction holds its position as the leading predictor for organisational citizenship behaviour. Workers with high level of job satisfaction are more likely to engage in OCB (Brown, 1993).

Podsakoff et. al. (1997) found that role conflict and role ambiguity are negatively related and role clarity and role facilitation are positively related to organizational citizenship behaviour.

Podsakoff, Mackenzie and Bommer (1996) found that task characteristics had strong relationship with altruism, courtesy, conscientiousness, sportsmanship and civic virtue. Task feedback and intrinsic satisfaction show a positive relationship while task routinization establishes a negative relationship with OCB. Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Paine & Bachrach (2000) uncovered personality variables including conscientiousness, agreeableness, positive and negative affectivity as predictors of OCB. However, many studies analysed that personality variables fall into weaker sections as compared to attitudinal measures for predicting OCB (Organ & Ryan, 1995).

Leader Behaviour has also been found to be a good antecedent of OCB. . A leader is a person who generally works to create a difference by implementing change, adding value to things and disseminating positive energy within the team. Leadership is critical in codifying and maintaining an organization's purpose, values, and vision.

Podsakoff et al. (2000) explained that leaders strongly influence the behaviour of employees towards other individuals and organizations and the relationship between the leader and followers mainly counts. The leader member exchange was positively related to altruism and an overall composite measure of OCB. Praising good performance and expressing satisfaction will also help to develop OCB. Leaders must set the example by living the elements of culture: values, behaviours, measures, and actions (Kefela, 2010).

These behaviours can be differentiated into four different categories: Transformational leadership behaviour, transactional leadership behaviour, Path goal approach of leader behaviours and leader member exchange. Bass (1985) defined a transformational leader as one who motivates followers to do more than they are originally expected to do. Transformational leaders broaden and change the interests of their followers, and generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group. Bass (1985) found that transformational leadership consisted of four factors: charismatic leadership or idealized influence, inspirational leadership or motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. Bass (1998) has established significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and the amount of effort followers are willing to exert, satisfaction with the leader, ratings of job performance and perceived effectiveness. Transformational leadership contributes significantly to effective organizational performance.

The quality of leader member exchange has been found to be positively related to followers' satisfaction, organizational commitment, role clarity, performance ratings given by leaders and objective performance and negatively related to role conflicts and turnover intention Gertsner and Day, 1997; Schriesheim et al., 1999.

The next section will explain how leaders influence organizational citizenship behaviour and how the performance of employees and organization get advantage from this.

2. Review of Literature

As the world is moving through a highly competitive scenario, the organisations need to have a workforce that will go above and beyond what is formally required. Organisational citizenship behaviour places itself on the same platform. The leader's behaviour is considered as one of the strong predictors of OCB. The effective leaders can motivate their employees to engage themselves in organisational citizenship behaviours by clarifying the paths and by producing a desired environment.

Studies on OCB have shown that the employees, who take these behaviours as a part of their job, show it more frequently (Morrison, 1994). OCB is a matter of intrinsic origin and it also needs a conducive and healthy environment to be promoted. An atmosphere of fairness will increase the level of OCB among employees (Mc Kenzie et al., 2001). Settoon and Mossholder (2002) had termed helping attitude towards co-workers as interpersonal citizenship behaviour. OCB is regarded as the employee's responsibility to support the organization and co-workers (Janssens, M., Sels, L., & Van den Brande, I. 2003).

Much research has shown that some personality variables like agreeableness are related to these behaviours (Borman, Penner, Allen and Motowidlo, 2001; Konovsky, Organ, 1996; Organ, Ryan, 1995). Penner, et al (1997) analysed that personality and motivation had an impact on OCB. Some research has explored that motivation can also act as an antecedent for organizational citizenship behaviour. The individual's motives are related to the quantum of organisational citizenship behaviour disposed (Kemery, et. al 1996; Tang and Ibrahim, 1998). It has been analysed that at individual level, OCB may be motivated by other drivers such as impression management motives (Bolino, 1999; Rioux and Penner, 2001). Organ (1998) had found that OCB is often internally motivated; these exist due to the need of competence, belongingness and achievement.

According to Podsakoff, et al, (2000), employee engagement with organizational citizenship behaviour depends on the quality of relationship between the employer and the employee. Cropanzano, Rupp and Byrne (2003) stated that a highly stressed and emotionally exhausted employee is very less committed towards his superiors and the organization and shows unwillingness to engage in OCB.

Perry, Kulik and Zhou (1999) have found that workers who are older than their supervisors tend to have more positive work behaviours. Employee's age can also be considered as an antecedent of OCB (Jahangir, et al, 2004).

Some studies had proved that certain behaviours are feminine and some are masculine in nature. Spence and Helmerich (1980) consider interpersonal orientation and concern for others as feminine behaviours and characterized aggressiveness and independence as masculine behaviours. Women usually engage in more organizational citizenship behaviours than men (Ostroff, C & E. Atwater, L, 2003).

Employees are always benefited by an effective leader. Fahr et al. (1990) provide evidence that leader fairness and task scope are important predictors of OCB while job satisfaction is not. Podsakoff et al. (1990) have provided evidence that one dimension of leadership, transformational leadership, is related to OCB. It can be influenced by many different factors such as job satisfaction,

reward, job characteristics, organizational characteristics, leadership and others. Leadership is considered as the influential factor (Podsakoff et al, 2000). Transformational leadership, defined as causing employees to do more than they are expected to do by identifying and articulating a vision, fostering the acceptance of group goals, having high performance expectations and the like, was found to have indirect effects on OCB. Such behaviours were mediated by employee trust in the leader. Bass and Avolio (1994) found that transformational leadership supports in improving operations of the organization by optimal utilization of its human resources. There is a relationship between leadership styles, normative motivation of followers and OCB (Graham, 1995). Charismatic or transformational leadership can motivate followers to perform beyond expectations (Bass, 1995).

Many studies related to OCB and transformational leadership show that transformational leaders inspire the behaviour of their followers by increasing their level of participation and belongingness through shared vision. They also invoke the sense of loyalty, trust and commitment which creates a positive environment for OCB. Leaders who are capable and are very clear in their vision not only influence their behaviours, but also provoke their employees to engage themselves in extra role actions (Organ, Podsakoff, McKenzie 2006). Studies prove that transformational and transactional leadership styles positively influence job satisfaction (Tsai and Su, 2011; Medley and Larochelle, 1995; Yammarino and Dubinsky, 1994) and also support to increase the level of OCB (Tsai and Su, 2011). Transformational and transactional leadership affect commitment and OCB by considering the mediating role played by fairness (Procedural and distributive justice) and trust (Pillai, et al 1999).

Many studies suggest that certain types of leader behaviour actually help employees to express OCB. A leader can involve employee in many things that will influence the employees to engage themselves in OCB. Leaders can take some steps that will increase the degree of employee involvement in OCB. For instance, they can select employees who possess better skill to show OCB or employees can also be trained for this (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, Bachrach; 2000).

Leaders can figure out the work environment that will propel the employees for these behaviours. If employees do not meet each other frequently, the sense of belongingness cannot be enhanced and employees cannot exhibit altruism. The leaders can potentially enhance OCB by changing the structure of tasks employees perform, the conditions under which they do their work, and/or human resource practices that govern their behaviour (Organ et al, 2005). Leaders who simultaneously communicate high expectations and confidence in followers are more likely to have followers who accept the goals of the leader and believe that they can contribute to goal accomplishment (Krishnan, 2000).

Leaders play a major role in shaping the behaviour of the employees. This can also be considered the other way round, that a less capable leader will produce more number of unsatisfied employees. Leadership does not show any direct effect on the job satisfaction of employees if they are less capable in communicating mission and vision or if they are unable to gain trust among employees (Oetomo, 2011).

What employees understand by OCB is also of a great importance for the leaders as they want to enhance the level of OCB shown. For instance Jiao & Zhang (2009) suggested that a better understanding of the OCB meanings conceived by employees can contribute to the better knowledge of the leadership influence process. If leaders place themselves in humble service to their organization, recognize the gift and talents of others, and call them forth through empowering actions, then people will respond through organizational citizenship behaviours, by helping each other, taking initiative, and taking responsibility to continuously develop themselves as potential leaders of organizations (O'Connell, 2010).

OCB can also be seen as a behaviour that is not always linked with organizational performance. It can be a part of individual motive; whether they want to deliver this type of behaviour. Many times OCB encouraged by the leaders and modelled by the management is not intended towards the benefit of the organization (Bowler & Duffy, 2002). Few researchers (Bolino, 1999; Bolino and Turnley, 2003) have posed a question mark on the nature of organizational citizenship behaviours actually promoting organizational goals and effectiveness.

Indian researchers have also shown their interest and contributed to knowledge in this sphere. Trust between employees acts as a predictor to develop OCB and supports in achieving the organizational goals (Chattopadhyay, 1999). Kumar and Bakshi (2009) found that OCB is applicable for the study of individual's behaviour in different cultural context across different industries.

Managers should try to exhibit transformational and karma yoga behaviours in order to increase altruism, conscientiousness and courtesy amongst the employees (Madhu and Krishnan 2005). Unnikammu Moideenkutty, Gary Blau, Ravi Kumar, Ahamdali Nalakath, (2006) point out that OCB has a strong relationship with satisfaction in communication with the supervisor.

Organizational citizenship is discretionary behavior that is not part of an employee's formal job requirements, but that promotes the effective functioning of the organization (Robbins, 1996). The consequences of Organisational citizenship behaviour are also examined by scholars. It plays its role in mainly two areas: organizational performance and success, and managerial evaluations of performance and reward allocation. In recent times Podsakoff, Blume, Whiting (2009) had stated that OCB was positively related to unit level performance and customer satisfaction. Some researchers had also succeeded in establishing a positive relationship between overall OCB and performance at group level. OCBs exclusively accounted for 42.9% of the variance in managerial performance evaluations (Podsakoff and colleagues 2000). Organizational citizenship behaviour is positively influenced by contingent reward behaviour (Asagari et, al. 2008).

Organizational citizenship behaviours also play a major role in information sharing, improving coordination and goal accomplishment at group levels (Podsakoff and MacKenzie, 1997). Broad research done in this area had supported the theory and it is widely accepted by existing scholars that organisational citizenship behaviours have an accumulative positive effect on overall organizational functioning (Wagner & Rush, 2000). Koys (2001) has found that interpersonal OCB motivates employees to work together.

Many researches support that organizational citizenship behaviours are positively related to organisational effectiveness. Organizations will gain an edge over their competitors for a sustainable time period if their employees are creative, innovative and having the willingness to go beyond the job description. Katz and Kahn (1978) pointed out that organizational citizenship behaviours are of much importance for the survival of organizations. Organizational citizenship is extremely valuable to organizations and contributes to performance and competitive advantage (Nemeth & Staw 1989).

OCB can be considered as performance that supports the social and psychological environment in which task performance takes place (Organ, 1997) Organizational citizenship behaviour also establishes its linkage with customer satisfaction (Morrison,1997) and financial performance (Walz,1996). Some studies have pointed that OCB are positively related to indicators of individual, unit, and organizational performance (Werner, 1994; Podsakoff & Mackenzie 1994; Podsakoff, Ahearne & MacKenzie, 1997; Walz & Niehoff, 2000).

3. Conclusion

Many researchers has worked on organizational citizenship behaviour from outlook of employees (Hofmann et al., 2003; Morrison, 1994; Tepper & Taylor, 2003; Zellars, Tepper, & Duffy, 2002) describes how the perceptions of employees are changing and considering organizational citizenship behaviour as promoting individual and organizational performance. The current study put forward that leaders play significant role in forming OCB. Principally, transformational and transactional leaders motivate employees to show more citizenship behaviours. Leadership accounts a lot of variance for work-related behaviors of subordinates and effectiveness of organizations. It is universally proven by researchers that transformational leaders positively effect on organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB). The current study also explains positive transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behaviours (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). In line with our study Tsai and Su (2011), reveals from their study that managers who adopt apposite leadership behaviours will increase the level of job satisfaction and promote organizational citizenship behaviours. The exhibitions of OCBs can improve organizational performance. The limitation of the study is conceptual in nature and needs empirical investigation. The study can be taken further to prove it empirically.

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