

Impact of Job Characteristics on Organizational Citizenship Behavior

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This study aims to examine the effects of job characteristics on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) and to elucidate job satisfaction as an outcome. A total of 55 employees from the largest telecommunication company of Pakistan participated in this study. The results show that greater the job variety and job significance, there are greater chances of employees to exhibit OCB. Although OCB does not show any significant relationship with job identity and job autonomy, but it is positively related with job satisfaction. These findings suggest that in the corporate environment, higher management must keep this aspect in practice that to motivate employees to show OCB, job descriptions need to be highly enriched so that the employee got a chance of career development.

Keywords: OCB, job identity, job autonomy, job satisfaction, job significance

Although an organization may increase its competitiveness through a number of different ways, however research has increasingly emphasized on the employee behavior at workplace, as a mean of increasing organizational competitiveness. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs often tend to show a positive discretionary behavior at workplace. Organ (1998) has defined organizational citizenship behavior as "individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly reorganized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization". The same term has been refined as "the performance that supports the social and psychological environment in which task performance takes place" (Organ, 1997). There are various other terms which define similar extra role behavior such as organizational spontaneity (Jones, 1997), civic organizational behavior (Graham, 1991), contextual performance (Motowildo, Borman, & Schmit, 1997), and pro-social organizational behavior (Motowildo, 1986). However, the most recognized term for extra-role behavior is organizational citizenship behavior.

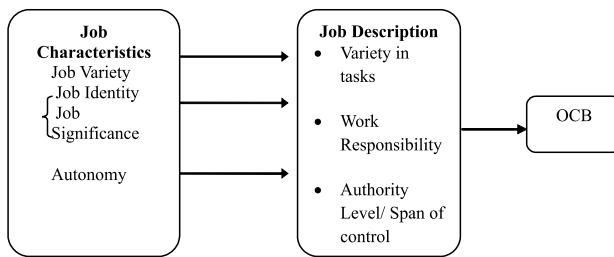
Keeping in view the concept of organizational citizenship behavior, the present research was carried out to explore the relationship between job characteristics and OCB. Previous researches have largely examined the impact of job characteristics on organizational commitment and job satisfaction. It is evident that increasing employee performance at workplace needs to enhance their job characteristic values.

Job characteristics

For the purpose of examining the relationship between job characteristics and organizational citizenship behavior, Hackman's and Oldman's job characteristic model is used. Job characteristic model is based on five different aspects of job. These aspects are: *job variety*, *job identity*, *job significance*, *autonomy* and *feedback*. The aspect of job variety allows the employees to utilize a number of different skills for executing the task assigned to them. Job identity allows the employee to take ownership and complete the

task at hand. Thirdly, job significance provides the employees an insight of how important the job executed by them is beneficial to the team or the company as a whole. Autonomy relates to the extent of freedom one has in performing a task assigned. Lastly, feedback is that dimension of job characteristics which defines the performance of a job to the employee (Chiu & Chen, 2005). The initial three dimensions of job characteristics express how significant the job is to the employee, and the remaining two define the extent of autonomy and feedback acquired from the job. Turner and Lawrence developed the initial job characteristics dimensions. that were mainly related to friendship opportunities and dealing with others (Lawrence, 1965). As these dimensions are not directly related to the job, they were excluded from the job characteristics model. Hence, this research has developed a model that is based on the Hackman and Oldman's job characteristics model (Kulik, Oldham, & Hacman, 1987).

According to the theory of motivation for job characteristics, it is concluded that all job characteristics dimensions are important to determine the performance and organizational citizenship behavior of employees. Therefore, for the purpose of this research, four dimensions of job characteristics were selected. This research will contribute towards filling gap in literature by examining the impact of job characteristics on organizational citizenship behavior in the following two ways. No study has been conducted in Pakistan as yet that explains the relationship between job characteristics and organizational citizenship behavior. Therefore, this study removes this gap for Pakistani work environment. As employee satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior are critical factors for smooth operations of any organization, these factors are therefore examined with job characteristics. The results of this research will support the organizational management to develop proper and suitable job related documents, so as to improve employee satisfaction and provide opportunities for employees to exhibit OCB. There exists a direct relation between job characteristics and job design, and it is diagrammatically explained as below:



Secondly, this research will contribute to the literature by examining the relationship between job satisfaction that is obtained as a result of OCB and suitable job characteristics as many researchers have explained the relation of employee behavior and OCB in different context (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Organ, 1988; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Fetter, 1993; Kiggundu, 1983).

In conclusion to the above discussion, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- Job variety is positively related to OCB.
- Job identity is positively related to OCB.
- Job Significance is positively related to OCB.
- Autonomy is positively related to OCB.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Employees often exhibit a discretionary behavior that is known as organizational citizenship behavior. As an organization, these discretionary efforts are not expected from the employees, and are therefore not recognized as a formal reward, for their presence.

According to a research, OCB is not affected by the organization due to three reasons. OCB is tough to rate as it is elusive; therefore it is difficult to include it in appraisal rankings. Secondly, OCB may drive away employees to perform their own tasks. Lastly, OCB in no way, a contractual requirement of the organization, therefore organization cannot push employees to perform OCB (Schnake, 1991). Another study on OCB supports this fact, and categorizes OCB as a more social exchange than the economic one. According to (Moorman, 1991) the social exchange occurs beyond the contractual nature on job; therefore the exchange happens to be more towards vagueness that allows employee to exhibit discretionary behaviors.

Only a few studies have investigated the relationship between job characteristics and organizational citizenship behaviors (Farh, Podsakoff, & Organ, 1990; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Fetter, 1993). However, the relationships have not been clearly defined.

There are various other terms which define similar extra role behavior such as organizational spontaneity (Jones, 1997), civic organizational behavior (Graham, 1991), contextual performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997), and pro-social organizational behavior (Motowidlo A. P., 1986). However, the most recognized term for extra-role behavior is organizational citizenship behavior.

Keeping in view the concept of organizational citizenship behavior, this research aims to explore the relationship between job characteristics and OCB. Previous researches have been examining the impact of job characteristics on organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Moreover, it is suggested to enhance the job characteristic values, consequently increasing employee performance at workplace.

OCB Dimensions

Altruism. Altruism represents the first dimension of OCB. This behavior is a reflection of employee behavior that depicts helpfulness at workplace for any job related problems that might take place during working hours. This kind of behavior is beneficial for the whole team. Firstly, it gives an impression to the supervisor that his subordinates do not require frequent help. Secondly, it creates an atmosphere of working as a family and create conducive work environment (Organ, 1988).

Courtesy. Another dimension of OCB is courtesy. This kind of behavior is useful for avoiding or at least lessening the impact of any severe job related problem to occur at workplace. Courtesy includes behavior such as reminders and initial notices (Organ, 1988).

Conscientiousness. Conscientiousness deals with those behaviors that are responsible for following rules and regulations at workplace. This dimension may include following company policies and procedures, being punctual, and securing official information (Organ, 1988).

Sportsmanship. Sportsmanship mainly represents lack of grievances. This means that the employees refrain from complaining on minor issues which are not desired by the employees at workplace (Organ, 1988).

Civic Virtue. Civic virtue is that dimension of OCB which involves being updated with the vital issues of the organization. Moreover, it also involves employee's political interest in organization working. According to Organ (1988), it is not necessary that all dimensions may occur simultaneously.

For this study, OCB has been taken as a whole concept rather than sub divisions of its dimensions.

Job Satisfaction

According the research, there is a positive relationship between job characteristics and personality traits, which significantly influences job satisfaction and employee commitment (Chang & Lee, 2006)

Bateman and Organ showed that job satisfaction and OCB had a positive relation (Bateman & Organ, 1983) Organ & Ryan, 1995). Social exchange theory is widely cited by scholars to explain why employees display OCB.

The present research focuses on the fact that only those employees who demonstrate a high degree of OCB are

satisfied with their job and professional life, therefore the following proposition is proposed:

H₅: Job characteristic have a positive relationship with OCB which consequently leads to employee satisfaction.

Figure 2. Research Model



Method

The participants of this research were obtained from the largest telecommunication company of Pakistan PTCL, which included both engineers and administrative staff. Participants voluntarily participated and were provided a written statement that their responses will be kept confidential. The total number of distributed questionnaires was 80, however only 55 were returned. Therefore, the return rate is 69%.

The participants consisted of 31 male and 24 female. 22% of respondents were within the age group of 20 – 25 years, 64% were within 26 – 30 years and 34% were above 30 years of age. 85% of the respondents had Master Degree in their respective field of work.

Measures

Job characteristics

Job characteristics were assessed using the 12 items from the adapted scale by Hackman and Oldham (1975, 1980) to measure the four dimensions of job characteristics; job identity, job significance, job variety and autonomy. The respective coefficient alphas for all these four job characteristics were 1. The rating used in the questionnaire was 5 point Likert Scale that ranges from 5 as strongly disagree to 1 as strongly agree. Similar ratings were used for OCB and job satisfaction.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

OCB was assessed using 19 items from the adapted scale by Allen and Lee, Motowidlo and Van Scotter and Podsakoff & MacKenzie to measure employee’s positive behavior towards organization (K & NJ, 2002; Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1994).

In this research, the variables have been reported by the employees themselves. Podsakoff & Organ (1986) believe that self-assessed variables may cause biasness but according to Fried & Ferris (1987), same source bias is not a serious threat to job characteristics research. Another source of data can be managerial evaluation. This kind of data also has some flaws as an employee extra-role behavior cannot completely be evaluated by the management as well.

Research Model

The following research model has been proposed.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction was assessed with the 10 items of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. The overall coefficient alpha for job satisfaction is 1.

Results

Table 1 represents the means, standard deviations and correlations of all the variables used for this research. As the table explains, OCB is positively correlated with job variety, job significance and job autonomy (r = 0.4, 0.56, 0.2, respectively). No relationship existed between job identity and job characteristics (r = -0.04, -0.56). These results shows that majority of the variables have a positive relationship with job characteristics. Next, OCB had a positive relationship with job satisfaction (r = 0.398).

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations among Variables

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
Job Variety	4.67	1.236	1					
Job Identity	2.94	1.358	0.169	1				
Job Significance	6.67	2.323	0.54	-0.214	1			
Autonomy	5.01	1.806	0.44	-0.127	0.625	1		
Job Satisfaction	19.24	4.431	0.43	-0.44	0.56	0.443	1	
OCB	45.10	11.637	0.395**	-0.037	0.556**	0.166	0.398**	1

Regression analysis was used to examine the relationship between job characteristics and OCB. As shown in table 2, job variety and job significance (Beta = 0.2, 0.8, respectively) significantly predicted OCB whereas job identity and job autonomy (Beta = 0.04, -0.4, respectively) did not affect OCB. Therefore, the above mentioned details demonstrate that greater the job variety and job significance, there are greater chances of employees to exhibit OCB.

Hypothesis 1 and 3 gain full support through the data whereas hypothesis 2 and 4 are rejected.

Table 2

Regression Analysis for the effects of Job Characteristics on OCB

Model	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
(Constant)	24.841	5.792		4.289	.000
Job Variety	1.513	1.302	.161	1.162	.251
Job Identity	.398	1.013	.046	.393	.696
Job Significance	3.792	.827	.757	4.587	.000
Job Autonomy	-2.649	.953	-.411	-2.779	.008

a. Dependent Variable: OCB

According to the analysis H5 is accepted as OCB is positively related to job satisfaction.

Discussion

The main objective of the study was to examine the relationship between job characteristics and OCB at PTCL as well as to investigate job satisfaction as its outcome. Results showed that there is a positive relationship of job variety and job significance with OCB. However, job identity and job significance did not show any relationship with OCB.

The findings of the present study are consistent with the research findings of Farh, Podsakoff, and Organ (1990), Cappelli and Rogovsky (1998) and Chiu and Chen (2005). The greater the variety in job and availability of job significance, there are more chances of an employee to show OCB.

This research also proves that there exists no significant relationship between job autonomy and job identity. These results are consistent with the research findings of Cappelli and Rogovsky (1998), which did not reveal any relationship between job identity and job autonomy and OCB.

Implications & Direction for Future Research

Organizational Citizenship Behavior and satisfaction of employees with the job are vital factors for the effective functioning of the organization. They provide the management with an imminent on how to analyze job and document proper job description for each position in the organization.

This study has important implications for corporate management sector as the results show that out of the four dimensions discussed, two dimensions of job characteristics affect OCB. Therefore, the managerial personnel can make use of this research in a way that can emphasize more on those two dimensions that lead the employee to display OCB, i.e. job variety and job significance. In this way the employee will be able to perform well and at the same time indulge in positive discretionary behavior that are productive for the organization.

Secondly, this research can be extended by comparing the OCB of wireless/ landline sector telecommunication

employees with that of cellular companies presently operating in Pakistan.

Thirdly, OCB of Pakistani culture can be compared with that of the West. In this way, an extension research on the behaviors of Asian and Western employees can be studied.

Fourthly, other sectors of the economy can be targeted for this research.

Conclusion

The present study proves to be a contribution to literature by bridging gaps in the field of job characteristics and organizational citizenship behavior, in Pakistani environment, focusing the telecommunication employees. Results showed that there is a positive relationship of job variety and job significance on OCB. However, job identity and job significance did not show any relationship with OCB. Furthermore, the greater the variety in job and availability of job significance, there are more chances of an employee to show OCB. This research further demonstrates that there does not exist any significant relationship between job autonomy and job identity.

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