

Organization Citizenship Behavior

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In Organizations where hierarchical structures may be flatter, or less emphasized, especially in smaller medium-sized businesses, it is important to have good relationships among co-workers. Being helpful and supportive of colleagues in a way that benefits the organisation, working towards the organization's goals – this is embodied in the definition of citizenship behaviour (Deww Zhang, 2011). Organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) has garnered much academic attention since its conception. It is perceived to be something intangible; OCB is not always formally recognized or rewarded, and concepts like 'helpfulness' or 'friendliness' are also difficult to quantify. Yet OCB has been shown to have a considerable positive impact at the organizational level, enhancing organizational effectiveness from 18 to 38% across different dimensions of measurement (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine & Bachrach, 2000; Ehrhart, 2004).

Organizational citizenship behavior is the technical psychological term for what can be simply defined as the compilation of individual behaviors in a group setting. Organizational citizenship behavior was first defined by Dennis Organ in 1988 as "an individual behavior which is not rewarded by a formal reward system ... but that, when combined with the same behavior in a group, results in effectiveness." OCB refers to anything that employees choose to do, spontaneously and of their own accord, which often lies outside of their specified contractual obligations. In other words, it is discretionary. OCB may not always be directly and formally recognized or rewarded by the company, through salary increments or promotions for example, though of course OCB may be reflected in favorable supervisor and co-worker ratings, or better performance appraisals. In this way it can facilitate future reward gain indirectly. Finally, and critically, OCB must 'promote the effective functioning of the organisation' (Organ, 1988, p. 4).

OCB is conceptualized as synonymous with the concept of contextual performance, defined as 'performance that supports the social and psychological environment in which task performance takes place' (Organ, 1997, p. 95). While this reflects the flexible nature of workers' roles in the modern workplace, and acknowledges the fact that employees do get recognized and rewarded for engaging in OCB (Van Scotter, Motowidlo & Cross, 2000; Werner, 1994), the colloquial understanding of OCB as going 'the extra mile' or 'above and beyond' to help others at work is an idea that many are familiar with, and these ideas continue to be a popular way of conceptualizing OCB. (Deww Zhang, 2011)

The effects on employee performance are threefold. Firstly, workers who engage in OCB tend to receive better performance ratings by their managers (Podsakoff et al., 2009). This could be because employees who engage in OCB are simply liked more and perceived more favorably (this has become known as the 'halo effect'), or it may be due to more work-related reasons such as the manager's belief that OCB plays a significant role in the organization's overall success, or perception of OCB as a form of employee commitment due to its voluntary nature (Organ et al., 2006). Regardless of the reason, the second effect is that a better performance rating is linked to gaining rewards (Podsakoff et al., 2009) – such as pay increments, bonuses, promotions or work-related benefits. Thirdly, because these employees have better performance ratings and receive greater rewards, when the company is downsizing e.g. during an economic recession, these employees will have a lower chance of being made redundant (Organ et al, 2006).

The reason why OCB has such gripping effects on the individual and the success of an organisation are offered by Organ et al. (2006) through the following suggestions.

OCB can

- Enhance productivity (helping new co-workers; helping colleagues meet deadlines, helping individuals in community set-up to live life with more ease.)
- Free up resources [autonomous, cooperative employees give managers more time to clear their work; helpful behaviour facilitates cohesiveness (as part of group maintenance behaviour in cooperative societies, civil societies, and various other groups formed in community)].
- Attract and retain good employees (through creating and maintaining a friendly, supportive working environment and a sense of belonging)
- Create social capital (better communication and stronger networks facilitate accurate information transfer and improve efficiency; this would also form strong bond amongst people socially and lead to a strong social community and build healthier social relations in community.)

There are five dimensions of OCBs

Altruism

Altruism is defined as the desire to help or otherwise assist another individual, while not expecting a reward in compensation for that assistance. Oxford Dictionary defines altruism as ‘Disinterested and selfless concern for the well-being of others.’

An example in the community can be when someone who drives a neighbor to work when their car has broken down, while not expecting money or favors in compensation. In a business setting, altruistic behavior is generally related to the work or project that the business group is working on. Someone exhibiting altruistic behavior in a group setting might volunteer to work on certain special projects, voluntarily helping or assisting other employees with their work or with other tasks, and volunteering to do additional work in order to help other employees reduce their own work load.

In India, on the other hand, in ABC Ltd., when the workers went on strike, the office staff, though from various backgrounds of education and training, helped the management by working on machines and manufacturing the required number of toothbrushes for dispatch in order to meet the deadline of orders.

Altruism in the workplace leads to productivity and effectiveness because it encourages good inter-employee relations; it can also reduce the stress load

on other employees, such as those who are overwhelmed without a little bit of help, which will in turn increase productivity.

Altruism in the community can reinstall the faith of people in other people and keep alive the feeling of togetherness, kindness and goodness. These small acts of kindness put a smile on people’s face. They help a lot in building good social relationships in community.

Courtesy

Courtesy is defined as behavior which is polite and considerate towards other people. Oxford Dictionary explains Courtesy as

‘The showing of politeness in one’s attitude and behaviour towards others’

For Courtesy instances in community set-up, in Canada, a most relevant example would be tipping the waiters at the restaurants at the end of the meal.

These days the bill amount is inclusive of 15% of the billing amount as a tip for the waiter. The bare minimum expected is 15% of the total price of the bill, but over-tipping in the case of exceptionally good service is common as well. Failing to tip (or under-tipping) is considered extremely rude and will probably generate some sort of immediate reaction, even if only a subtle one. Simple daily acts like that of greeting people early in the morning whilst on the morning walk schedule, opening doors for a lady while entering restaurants, offices, movie theatres etc... Inquiring from a neighbor if their child’s health is fine and how the elderly in the house doing et al are acts of courtesy.

In a business context, courtesy is usually exhibited through behaviors such as inquiring about personal subjects that a coworker has previously brought up, asking if a coworker is having any trouble with a certain work related project, and informing coworkers about prior commitments or any other problems that might cause them to reduce their workload or be absent from work.

Courtesy not only encourages positive social interactions between employees, which improve the work environment, but they can reduce any potential stress that might occur from employees who do not have the courtesy to inform their coworkers about issues such as upcoming absences from work – and so on.

Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship is defined as exhibiting no negative behavior when something does not go as planned –

or when something is being perceived as annoying, difficult, frustrating or otherwise negative.

When the child loses a gully-cricket match and doesn't blame others for his failure he demonstrates sportsmanship. In adult context, when a dish on the dinner menu goes a bit off track and turns out to be salty despite of that if the cook accepts the mistake and improvises it, s/he too demonstrate same behaviour.

In the context of corporate, good sportsmanship is usually related to potential complaints about work or workloads in addition to negativity surrounding work-related surprises.

Corporate examples of sportsmanship not sulking when a colleague is better rated in the performance . Open appreciation / acknowledging excellence of other teams of their initiative or innovativeness is a way to display sportsmanship.

Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness is defined as behavior that suggests a reasonable level of self-control and discipline, which extends beyond the minimum requirements expected in that situation. Oxford dictionary defines it as 'Wishing to do one's work or duty well and thoroughly.'

It is a fundamental personality trait that influences people to set and keep long-range goals, deliberate over choices or behave impulsively, and take their obligations to others seriously. Conscientiousness is a key ingredient in success, but the off-the-charts conscientious may court perfectionism by setting their goals too high.

For example, people who are conscientious are more planned, organized and proactive in their approach. They always tend to go beyond what is expected from them. They are particular in their method and always get things right.

In the context of a business setting, conscientiousness is observed when an employee not only meets their employer's requirements—such as coming into work on time and completing assignments on time—but exceeds them. Exceeding these requirements, and thereby showing conscientiousness, could be observed—for example—by an employee planning ahead to ensure that they, and their coworkers, do not become overwhelmed in their work.

Conscientiousness as a behavioral trait to be exhibited depends on the personality of an individual irrespective of what part of globe s/he belongs to.

Conscientiousness refers to adjectives such as neat, punctual, careful, and self disciplined, and reliable. Employees high on conscientiousness could also be predisposed to develop behaviors which extend beyond the expected task performance behaviors. A positive correlation of conscientious and OCB might be assumed because OCB is a type of behaviour which extends beyond the expected task performance (A. Singh & A. Singh, 2009).

There are organizations who state in their value statement of the organizations, values like Boundaryless, Stretch and recognize employees through the employee engagement activities.

Civic Virtue

Civic virtue is defined as behavior which exhibits how well a person represents an organization/community with which they are associated, and how well that person supports their organization/community outside of an official capacity.

In a community setting one example in Indian context would be most fresh to cite that of Swatchh Bharat. An individual who goes that extra bit for caring for the community exhibits civic virtue. With relevance to example this person can pick up the trash on the road that s/he sees and thinks that it is their responsibility and feels like volunteering to make India, their community cleaner exhibits Civic Virtue in its true sense.

Civic virtue encourages a sense of community within a business setting, which has been shown to be linked to job performance and job satisfaction in employees. Employees who feel a stronger connection with their place of employment are more likely to be productive and effective workers, when compared to those who do not share a sense of community.

Citizenship status often implies some responsibilities and duties. This also implies working towards the betterment of one's community through economic participation, public service, volunteer work and other such efforts to improve life for all citizens. Bateman and Organ (1983) developed the first scales to measure OCB.

According to them, OCB include any of those gestures often taken for granted that lubricate the social machinery. Examples like helping coworkers with job related problems, accepting orders without a fuss, tolerating temporary impositions without complaints, helping to keep work area clean or uncluttered, making timely and constructive statements about the work unit or its head to outsiders, promoting a work

climate that is tolerable and minimizing distractions created by interpersonal conflict, and protecting and conserving organizational resources, for lack of a better term are referred by the authors as "Citizenship Behaviors."

Most of the characteristics of OCB in India have fallout from the basic religious and cultural philosophy that guide individual and public behavior. The Indian ethos which get reflected in the religious texts like the Vedas and the Upanishad has immense bearing on the values such as Altruism and Conscientiousness. The Indian philosophy of 'VasudevanKutubam' (The world is one family) is a virtue which enlarges perspective from self to others. Orientation to the values at workplace does impact, however that is gradual which begins as part of the formal orientation program of the organization and has to be continued consciously by the individual for personal and organizational effectiveness.

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