

Examining the organizational citizenship behavior as the outcome of organizational commitment: Case study of universities in Ilam

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ABSTRACT

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is one of the most important factors on improving the efficiency of organizations. The proposed study of this paper investigates the relative importance of OCB in different universities located in the province of Ilam, Iran. The study distributes 220 questionnaires, collects 199 and analyzes them using LISREL software package. There are four hypotheses associated with this survey and the results indicate that educational opportunities, work-life policy, empowerment activities have strong positive relationship on organizational commitment and organizational commitment also influences organizational citizenship behavior, accordingly.

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1. Introduction

For over 65 years, there have been tremendous efforts on investigating employees' behaviors, which are exclusive characteristics of any one (Koster et al., 2006; Noor, 2009). Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is people's right, which is not determined by organizational award and it is not part of employees' responsibilities (Podsakoff et al., 1990). OCB has three aspects: first, the activity is volunteer job, second, it is associated with organization and it has multi dimensional aspects (Bienstock et al., 2003). According to Podsakoff et al. (1990, 2000), there were only 13 articles associated with OCB between years of 1988 and 1993. However, there was a growing interest from year 1993 to 1998, which yields over 122 articles in different fields of human resource management, marketing, health care, psychology, strategic management, etc.

These studies are concentrated in four aspects including job and leadership specification, personal characteristics and leadership behavior. Today, there is an intensive competition among organizations, which is the results of a steady increase on knowledge (Gautam et al., 2004; Šušnjar & Zimanji, 2006). Organ (1995) reported fairness and organizational commitment as two most

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important influencing factors on organizational behavior based on a comprehensive study on 55 different studies. Meyer and Allen (1984) believed there were three organizational commitment including moral continuous and ethical commitments. These have strong relationship between OCB and commitment. According to Porter et al. (1974) commitment involves with employees' moral and emotional commitment where employees specify their identity based on an organizational objectives. Organizational commitment specifies anyone's efforts and willingness on reaching firm's objectives (Robbins, 1993). Joolideh et al. (2009) explained that a good educational program is designed based on the professional university professors who are responsible for leading the business unit. Chughtai (2006) explained that an existence commitment among university professors help organization increase their efficiencies.

2. Literature review

2.1 Training and development opportunities

Training opportunities could always create better chances for increasing employees' abilities to improve capabilities of organizations, which yields to profit maximization (Susnjar, 2006). During the past ten years, there have been tremendous changes on educational systems in the world (Garavan et al., 1993). There are many evidences to believe that in this century, human resources play key role on the success of organizations. Creative human resources along with good background educational and background skills build organizations' future (Khayyat, 1998).

Education improves relationship between employee and management (Kalleberg, 1994) and many organizations invest on education to reach their objectives (Liu, 2007). Nevertheless, continuous improvement and learning is ignored among many individuals (Brown et al., 2002). Chang (1999) reported that when an organization invests on education, the management is worried about employees' commitment and learning is a method to increase their commitments (Dockel et al., 2006). The first hypothesis of this paper is as follows,

H1: Training and development opportunities have positive relationship with organizational commitment.

2.2 Work-life policy

There have been many studies on measuring the impact of various factors on working environment such as employees' responsibilities, conflict of interests, family responsibilities, etc. (Glass, 1998; Kahn et al., 1964). According to Pleck et al. (1980), too much work, afternoon shift work, working conditions with no flexibility, the lack of ability to leave the job in emergency conditions are among the most important challenges in work-life issues. Khan et al. (1964) believed work pressure plays an essential role on creating conflict on work-life policy. In fact, when such conflict happens people with different personalities may have serious problems (Katz et al., 1978; Schwartz, 1996; Pleck et al., 1980).

According to Simon et al. (2006) there are three types of conflicts: the first one happens when there is a conflict for the time spent in job and other family oriented issues. The second one is associated with pressure, which occurs once the performance of a person is reduced as a result of stressful reaction of the third party.

The third one is the conflict on behavior, which is the result of change on position. Schwarts (1996) work-life could improve people's lives and could increase their interest in their work. Deery (2008) reported that different strategies for creating a balance between work and life created by employees impact their performance, significantly because if there is a conflict between these two issues, we may see a clear problem in performance. The second hypothesis is as follows,

H2: There is positive relationship between work-life and organizational commitment.

2.3 Empowerment practices

The first definition of empowerment practices goes back to 1788, where it was considered as an ability for giving a responsibility to a person who is qualified to act for a position (Naderi et al., 2007). For over fifty years, empowerment practices have been a subject of intensive investigation (Nykodym et al., 1994). Samat et al. (2006) explained that empowering employee could increase the quality of product and services. According to Jahangiri (2007), employees with better skills could better contribute to their organizations. Empowering practices include employee commitment and the level of their contribution (McEwan & Sackett, 1997; Val, 2003; Greasley et al., 2008). Spreitzer (1995) performed a study and found a positive relationship between empowering activities and job satisfaction. Meyerson et al. (2008) reported that when employee is empowered, he/she will feel more confident and could be expected well when a job is assigned to a person who has already been under exclusive training. Moye and Henkin (2006) reported that these people could even make better decisions and could attract more customers. Lee et al. (2006) indicated that empowering people could lead an organization to have more commitment people. Bhatnagar (2007) and Denton (1994) also provided some evidence to support Lee's report. The third hypothesis of this study is as follows,

H3: There is positive relationship between empowering practices and organizational commitment.

2.4 Organizational commitment

For over 30 years, the concept of organizational commitment has been improved (Putterill & Rohrer, 1995). Organizational commitment is a concept has multi dimensional concept, which yields positive outcome on job including a remarkable reduction on work absence, citizenship organizational behavior, etc. (Chew, 2008). There are two approaches on organizational commitment: The first one specifies that commitment is a primary objective for continuous contribution to work and the second one is associated with the level of interest among members of organization, which is also a reflection from employees to organization (Jaramillo & Nixon, 2005).

According to Alvani (1998), people who have strong commitment to organization spend more time on their work and perform their jobs with more discipline. McCabe (2008) explained that commitment is the most influential factors for the success of an organization. Freund (2003) believes that a highly committed person increase organizations' efficiency more effectively. Aube et al. (2007) also support this idea and suggest increasing organizational commitment through hiring people with strong motivations for long-term positions. There are many reasons to support this argument. First, there are many evidences, which indicate that organizational commitment has positive relationship with job satisfaction, job performance and employee's leave. Second, organizational commitment is relatively a new concept, which is different from job satisfaction (Hosseini et al., 2008). Finally, commitment represents citizenship behavior because it influences this factor, substantially.

H4: There is positive relationship between organizational commitment and OCB.

2.5 Organizational citizenship behavior

Organizational atmosphere is influenced significantly by organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) because it makes significant change on people's perspective on working conditions (Dimitriades, 2007; Van Dyne, 1990; Van Dyne et al., 1994). In other words, organizational effectiveness and customer's feedback from the quality of services have direct relationship with OCB (Torlak, 2007). Bolino et al. (2003) explained that OCB we cannot improve it directly. According to Bell (2002) OCB includes five perspectives including friendship, responsibility, kindness, courtesy and sportsmanship. McKenzie et al. (1993) explained that a kind organization contributes more on society. Podsakoff et al. (1990) believed that those employees with strong sense of sportsmanship could substantially attract more customers for their organizations.

3. Proposed study

The proposed study of this paper investigates whether training and development opportunities, work life policy and empowering practices could increase organizational commitment, which eventually yields an improvement on OCB. Fig. 1 shows details of our survey.

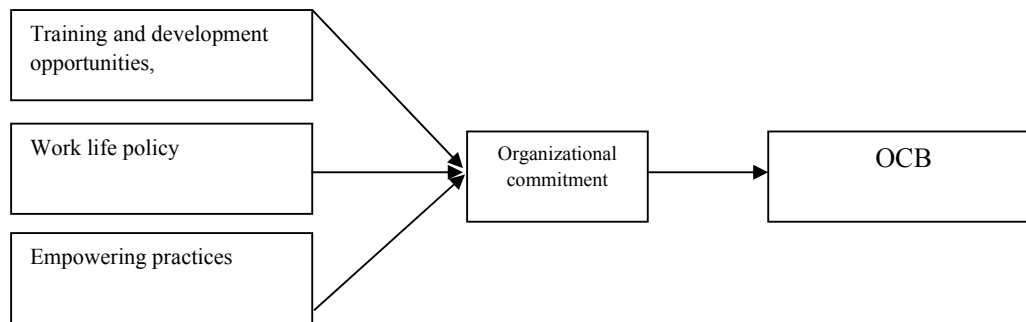


Fig. 1. The proposed study

The proposed study of this paper has three independent variables including training and development opportunities, work-life policy and empowering practices. There is one intermediate variable, which is organizational commitment and OCB is the only dependent variable. The study uses Likert based questionnaire from completely disagree, 1 to completely agree, 5. There are 35 questions associated with five variables summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Questions and main variables of the proposed study

Title	# of questions
Training and development opportunities	6
Work life policy	4
Empowering practices	7
organizational commitment	8
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	10

In this survey, we have used the following equation to calculate the sample size,

$$5q \leq n \leq 15q, \quad (1)$$

where n and q are sample size and number of questions in the questionnaire, respectively. Since there are 35 questions in our survey, the minimum sample size must be between 175 and 525. We have distributed 220 questionnaires and collected 199. Cronbach Alpha (Cronbach, 1951) was calculated as 0.94, which well above the minimum acceptable limit, 0.70, and we can conclude the results are highly valid. We have used structural equations to study the relationship among different component with factor analysis. The analysis was performed using LISREL software package and they are discussed. Let CDT represents training and development opportunities, WL represents work-life policy and EMP represents empowering practices, respectively. Let COM represents organizational commitment and ORB represents organizational citizenship behavior, respectively. Let γ_{ij} be structural coefficients of external variables to internal variables and β_{ij} be structural coefficients of internal variables, respectively. Therefore, we have the following relationships,

$$COM = \gamma_{11}CDT + \gamma_{12}WL + \gamma_{13}EMP + \xi_1 \quad (2)$$

$$ORB = \beta_{11}COM + \xi_2 \tag{3}$$

4. Results

The first step in our survey is to examine the values of t-students and Fig. 2 shows details of our survey.

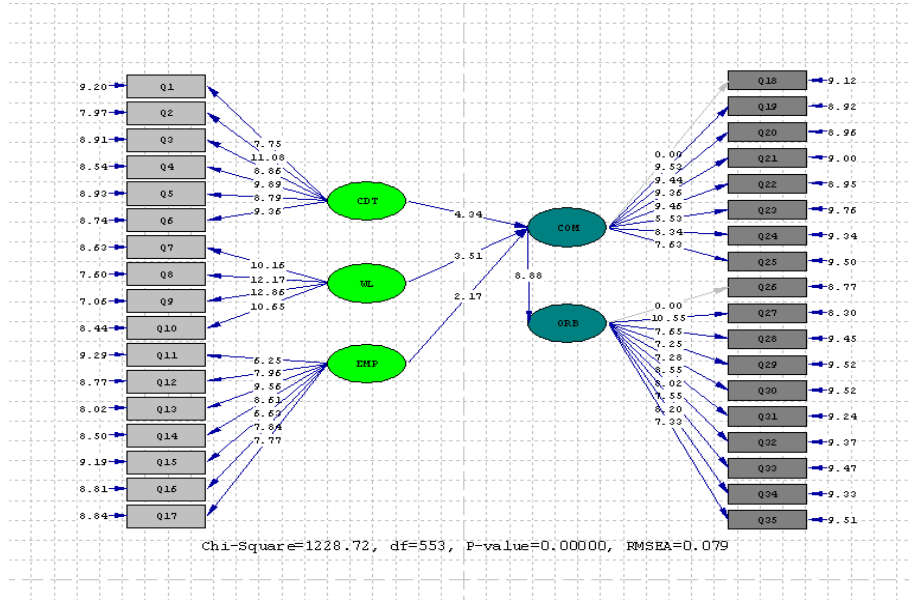


Fig. 2. T-student results among different variables

As we can observe from the results of Fig. 2, most t-students are highly valid, which indicates they represents the results are meaningful.

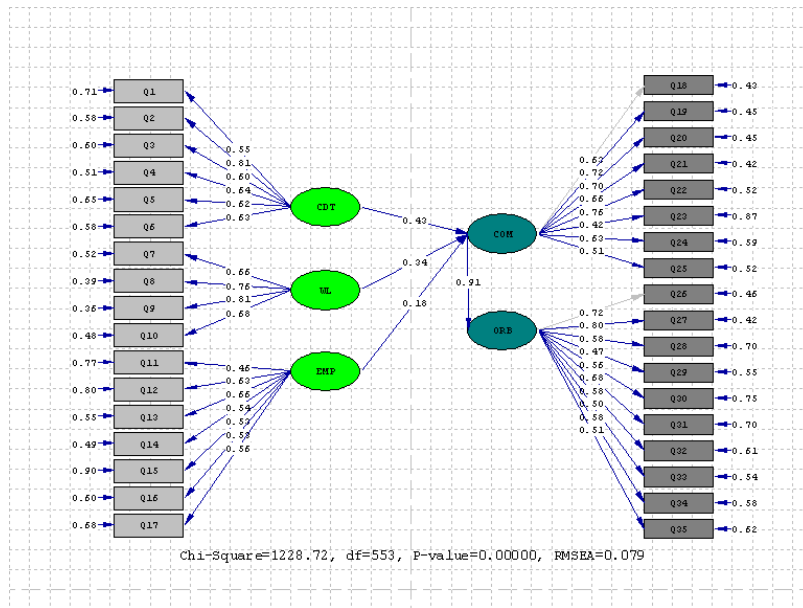


Fig. 3. The results of estimated coefficients

Based on the results represented in Fig. 3, we have extracted two relationships as follows,

$$COM = 0.43CDT + 0.43WL + 0.18EMP, \quad (4)$$

$$ORB = 0.91COM. \quad (5)$$

Table 2 shows correlation values among different variables. As we can observe from the results of the table, there is a strong correlation between ORB and COM and between CDT and COM and between WL and COM with 0.91, 0.78 and 0.76, respectively.

Table 2

Correlation values among different variables

	COM	ORB	CDT	WL	EPM
COM	1.00				
ORB	0.91	1.00			
CDT	0.78	0.71	1.00		
WL	0.76	0.69	0.71	1.00	
EPM	0.65	0.59	0.59	0.61	1.00

Table 3 shows details of our four hypotheses.

Table 3

The results of four hypotheses

Hypothesis	Parameter	Coefficient	T	Result
H1: Training and development opportunities have positive relationship with organizational commitment.	γ_{11}	0.43	4.34 > 1.96	Confirm
H2: There is positive relationship between work-life and organizational commitment.	γ_{12}	0.34	3.51 > 1.96	Confirm
H3: There is positive relationship between empowering practices and organizational commitment.	γ_{13}	0.18	2.17 > 1.96	Confirm
H4: There is positive relationship between organizational commitment and OCB.	β_{11}	0.91	8.88 > 1.96	Confirm

The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is calculated as 0.079, which is relatively a good value for our results. In addition, the goodness of fit index (GFI) and adjusted GFI (AGFI) are 0.74 and 0.70, respectively.

This means that our estimations are suitable. We have also considered Normed fit index (NFI), Non-Normed fit index (NNFI), comparative fit index (CFI) and incremental fit index (IFI) as 0.9, 0.94, 0.94 and 0.94, respectively. These observations clearly validate our results since they are well above 0.9.

4.1. First hypothesis: Training opportunities and organizational commitment

$$\begin{cases} H_0 : \text{Training and development opportunities do not have positive relationship with organizational commitment.} \\ H_1 : \text{Training and development opportunities have positive relationship with organizational commitment.} \end{cases}$$

The regression function yields the following results,

$$COM = 0.43CDT + 0.34WL + 0.18EMP \quad (6)$$

Evaluation of this hypothesis using the empirical evidences and the t-test (4.34) indicates that given the significance level of sig: 0.000, which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$. Therefore, the hypothesis that states there is no relationship between training and development opportunities and organizational

commitment will be rejected and the hypothesis based on the relationship between two variables will be confirmed with a value of 0.43.

4.2. Second hypothesis: Work-life and organizational commitment

$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} H_0 : \text{Work-life commitment do not have positive relationship with organizational commitment.} \\ H_1 : \text{Work-life commitment have positive relationship with organizational commitment.} \end{array} \right.$

Again, our test on this hypothesis using the empirical evidences and the t-test (3.51) indicates that given the significance level of sig: 0.000, which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$. Therefore, the hypothesis that states there is no relationship between work-life policy and organizational commitment will be rejected and the hypothesis based on the relationship between two variables will be confirmed with a value of 0.34.

4.3. Third hypothesis: Empowering practices and organizational commitment

$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} H_0 : \text{Empowering practices do not have positive relationship with organizational commitment.} \\ H_1 : \text{Empowering practices have positive relationship with organizational commitment.} \end{array} \right.$

Again, our test on this hypothesis using the empirical evidences and the t-test (2.17) indicates that given the significance level of sig: 0.000, which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$. Therefore, the hypothesis that states there is no relationship between empowering practices and organizational commitment will be rejected and the hypothesis based on the relationship between two variables will be confirmed with a value of 0.18.

4.4. Fourth hypothesis: Organizational commitment and OCB

$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} H_0 : \text{There is no positive relationship between organizational commitment and OCB.} \\ H_1 : \text{There is a positive relationship between organizational commitment and OCB.} \end{array} \right.$

Again, our test on this hypothesis using the empirical evidences and the t-test (2.17) indicates that given the significance level of sig: 0.000, which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$. Therefore, the hypothesis that states there is no relationship between organizational commitment and OCB will be rejected and the hypothesis based on the relationship between two variables will be confirmed with a value of 0.91.

In summary, we have confirmed that we can improve organizational commitment through investing on training and educational programs, which is what the other people reported in previous studies (Antonacopoulou, 2000). Based on the results of the second hypothesis, we can conclude that when there is a good balance between work and life, there will be better outcome on organizational commitment, which yields better work performance (Deery, 2008). The third hypothesis has confirmed that there was a positive relationship between empowering workforce and organizational commitment, which confirms older studies (Lee et al., 2006). Finally, we can claim that the three mentioned factors could substantially increase organizational commitment, which also influences positively on OCB (Foote, 2005).

5. Conclusion

We have presented an empirical study to measure the relevant impact of different factors such as educational opportunities, work-life policy, empowerment activities on organizational commitment directly and the organizational citizenship behavior indirectly. The proposed study of this paper investigated the relative importance of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) in different universities located in the province of Ilam, Iran. The study distributed 220 questionnaires and

collected 199 and they were analyzed using LISREL software package. There were four hypotheses associated with this survey and the results indicated that educational opportunities, work-life policy, empowerment activities had strong positive relationship on organizational commitment and organizational commitment could influence organizational citizenship behavior, accordingly.

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