

Identifying the Key Factors of Organizational Citizenship Behavior in the Healthcare Industry: Iran Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The article aims to identify the key factors of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in the Iranian healthcare industry. The authors take a quantitative approach based on a survey involving 152 questionnaires. The respondents were employees of six healthcare centers in Tehran, Iran. Correlation tests and standard, stepwise regression analyses were conducted to test the research questions. Organizational citizenship behavior is a component of job performance and vital for the development of an industry. It is a function of five dimensions: altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy and civic virtue. The findings show that all dimensions have a positive relationship with OCB; civic virtue is the most salient dimension, with a 0.405 coefficient beta. The paper is useful to organizational-behavior practitioners and academics. It provides some initial insights for managers in the Iranian healthcare industry by encouraging employees' engagement in OCB.

Key words: Employees' Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Healthcare Industry, Iran

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1. Introduction

In a rapidly changing world, all industries or organizations are looking for competitive advantage, or even just a basic strategy to survive when they face severe competition from their competitors. According to the theoretical knowledge, there are many ways in which to increase the efficiency and profitability of an organization; one of these ways relates to employees.

Investigation of employees' behavior in relation to the organizational structure, which has a strong effect on employees' behavior, is supported by the theory of organizational behavior (Sevi, 2010), and specifically organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). In the early 1980s, the

concept of OCB was introduced to the world of science by Organ (1989). OCB is defined as a component of job performance (Murphy et al., 2002).

Bolino et al. (2002) defined OCB as the willingness of employees to exceed their formal job requirements in order to help each other, to subordinate their individual interests for the good of the organization, and to take a genuine interest in the organization's activities and overall mission. Appelbaum et al. (2004) said that OCB is discretionary behavior that is not part of an employee's formal job requirements, but promotes the effective functioning of the organization. Therefore, employee engagement in terms of OCB is useful for both employees and the organization. To sum up, OCB plays a pivotal role in the development and efficiency of an organization.

Since the introduction of OCB theory, there have been many studies on it. The first, and probably most significant, was conducted by Organ et al. in 1990; here, a model for OCB was introduced in which OCB was shown as a function of five dimensions: altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy and civic virtue. Since then, many researchers in this field have followed the proposed model.

According to the literature, the introduced model by Organ et al. (1990) have been used in numerous studies, thus making it the most utilized scale of OCB (LePine et al., 2002). In this research, the authors will implement the model introduced by Organ et al. (1990), in which OCB is a function of the five dimensions mentioned above.

In this research, research model will be supported by authors through review of previous studies on OCB. Then, authors are going to identify the key dimensions of OCB in the Iranian healthcare industry through using employee data from different Iranian healthcare centers which are located in Tehran. The conclusions of the research will have significant results related to OCB dimensions in the Iranian healthcare industry. Major conclusions provide important implications for managers, employees in the Iranian healthcare industry, and finally researchers who are concerned with OCB dimensions.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Past studies relevant to OCB

The term "OCB" was introduced by Organ and Konovsky (1989), who stated that OCB is an integral part of job performance. In 1989, Organ defined OCB as "individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization" (Sevi, 2010, p.25).

The five dimensions of OCB suggested by Organ in 1989 were based on empirical evidence obtained from several other studies in 1983, among the most important of which was a study conducted by Organ and Bateman under the title "Job satisfaction and the good soldier: The relationship between affect and employee citizenship" (Bateman & Organ, 1983).

After Organ (1989) introduced the OCB model and its dimensions, Organ et al. (1990) developed a scale in order to measure OCB and its dimensions based on this model (Organ et al., 1990). In addition, Organ et al. (1990) examined the vast amount of work conducted on OCB, as it has increasingly evoked interest among researchers (Organ et al., 1990).

Bolino and Turnley (2003) identified OCB as an organization's ability to elicit employee behavior that goes beyond the call of duty. They found that citizenship behaviors generally have two common features: they are not directly enforceable (i.e., they are not technically required as part of one's job), and they are representative of the special or extra efforts that organizations need from their workforce in order to be successful. Good citizenship as per Bolino and Turnley (2003) includes a variety of employee behaviors, such as taking on additional assignments, voluntarily assisting people at work, keeping up with developments in one's profession, following company rules (even when no one is looking), promoting and protecting the organization, keeping a positive attitude, and tolerating inconveniences at work. (Bolino & Turnley, 2003).

In 2012, Islam et al. conducted a study in Pakistan entitled "Key Factors of organizational citizenship behavior in the banking sector of Pakistan" (Islam et al., 2012). Since the research was carried out in Pakistan's banking sector, the problem statement of the study referred to the employees' OCB at 10 banks in Pakistan, which were selected at random. The authors' research model mentioned altruism, conscientiousness, and civic virtue as key factors of OCB. The hypotheses of the study were developed based on the Organ et al.'s (1990) research model. As a research methodology, a quantitative approach was taken by the authors, wherein 318 questionnaires were distributed among employees of 10 Pakistani banks. The results were obtained through factor loading, descriptive statistics, and linear regression. Islam et al. (2012) suggested, as a direct result of the findings, that each of the three factors (altruism, conscientiousness, civic virtue) has a positive and meaningful impact on OCB. In addition, their findings indicate, via a comparison of the factors, that the impact of altruism on OCB is more significant.

The importance of OCB has been mentioned in many studies (Chiu & Tsai, 2007;Islam et al., 2012;Koys, 2001;Poncheri, 2006). Koys(2001) implied that OCB impacts the profitability of an organization, while there is no impact on customer satisfaction. Poncheri(2006) believed that there is an affirmative impact of OCB on employees or their organization, while Chiu and Tsai (2007) stated that OCB is vital for teamwork, collaboration and innovation of employees. OCB can be seen as a tool for managers to form a cooperative work environment (Islam et al., 2012). Therefore, the above studies indicate that this kind of behavior is not only beyond organizational requirements, but also improves efficiency and solidarity in the working environment.

There is no consensus among researchers regarding the dimensions of OCB. For instance, Smith et al. (1983) suggested two categories for OCB: altruism and generalized compliance. Conversely, Organ (1991) mentioned that the five dimensions of OCB include altruism, conscientiousness, civic virtue, sportsmanship, and courtesy. The two major dimensions of OCB are largely thought to be altruism and conscientiousness (Borman et al., 2001).

By reviewing the previous studies as mentioned above, authors of this research conclude that OCB is having five dimensions of which are altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy and civic virtue.

2.2 Research model

Referring to the literature as discussed in 2.1 earlier, authors of this research concluded that OCB is a function of five dimensions mentioned above. The model of which is in line with the above literature review is the model developed by Organ et al. (1990). Figure 1 represents the model of the present research:

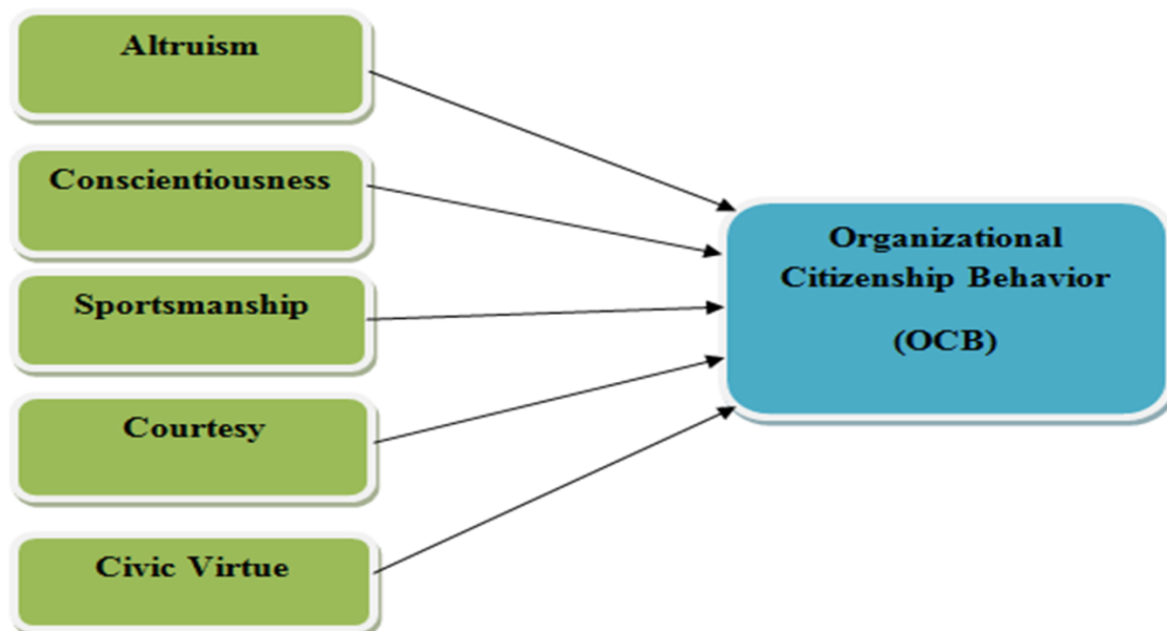


Figure 1: Model used in the study (Organ et al., 1990)

2.3 OCB dimensions

At this stage, there is a need to explain the OCB dimensions, and past studies relevant to each of these, as well as explaining the extent to which they are related to OCB. In order to further understanding of each dimension, the paper will discuss each in turn.

2.3.1 Altruism

According to Organ (1991), altruism involves helping colleagues and employees to perform their duties in unusual circumstances, or in a manner that goes beyond expectations. Todd (2003) defined altruism as the willingness to assist, or the devotion of an employee towards other colleagues and the organization. Altruism is known as one of the dimensions of OCB. People with the trait of altruism provide help when needed by colleagues, such as in times of high workload or colleague absence, or to aid new employees to adapt to new work

environments (Paré et al., 2000). Accordingly, based again on Organ (1997), the benefits of altruism is for individuals-directed behavior; moreover, altruism promotes employee efficiency (Yen & Niehoff, 2004), encourages cooperation between employees, and enhances team working (Islam et al., 2012). Islam et al. (2012) stated that OCB and altruism involve a deep relationship.

2.3.2 Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness has attracted a great deal of attention from researchers in relation to OCB (Borman et al., 2001). Conscientiousness, as outlined by Organ (1991), is a behavior that goes beyond the specific requirements of an organization. Redman and Snape(2005) defined conscientiousness in relation to voluntary behaviors to go beyond job requirements, and which may not be seen by anyone. Based on Konovsky and Organ (1996), there is a meaningful relationship between conscientiousness and all components of OCB. Conscientious employees tend to be more informed and to have more updated information about products and services offered (Yen & Niehoff, 2004). Conscientious people, in fact, deliver benefits to the organization (Organ, 1997). It seems that conscientiousness is the best means by which to promote work efficiency. King et al. (2005) explained that in theory, conscience is something like a lamp that illuminates the direction of desired target behaviors; thus, conscientiousness may be an important dimension of OCB.

2.3.3 Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship is a citizen-like posture of tolerating the inevitable inconveniences and impositions of work, without complaining or indicating grievances (Modassir & Singh, 2008). Sportsmanship, civic virtue and conscientiousness have been grouped into organization-directed behavior, and the positive relationship between each of them and OCB has been supported in previous research (Williams & Anderson, 1991).

2.3.4 Courtesy

Courtesy involves treating others with respect, preventing problems by keeping others informed of one's decisions and actions that may affect them, and passing along information to those who may find it useful (Modassir & Singh, 2008). Altruism and courtesy have been grouped into individual-directed behavior, and the positive relationship between each of them and OCB has also been supported (Williams & Anderson, 1991).

2.3.5 Civic virtue

Civic virtue refers to behaviors that display a responsible concern for the wellbeing and image of an organization (Redman & Snape, 2005). Borman et al. (2001) stated that civic virtue relates to individual behaviors that show an employee is responsibly concerned about the life of the organization, and is willing to participate in it.

There is a significant relationship between conscientiousness and civic virtue (Konovsky & Organ, 1996). A study conducted by Coole(2003) revealed that civic virtue is more restricted in related to organizational effectiveness, as, for instance, the more effective the organization, the

more chances there are for this behavior to emerge. As noted by Baker (2005), in the political processes of the organization, the behavior of civic virtue has a responsible and productive role.

2.4 Formulation of Research questions

According to the research model described in Figure - 1, the research questions (RQs) of this research are as followings:

RQ1: Is altruism having a relationship with OCB in the Iranian healthcare industry?

RQ2: Is conscientiousness having a relationship with OCB in the Iranian healthcare industry?

RQ3: Is sportsmanship having a relationship with OCB in the Iranian healthcare industry?

RQ4: Is courtesy having a relationship with OCB in the Iranian healthcare industry?

RQ5: Is civic virtue having a relationship with OCB in the Iranian healthcare industry?

RQ6: which one of the OCB dimensions is the best dimension for OCB in the Iranian healthcare industry?

2.5 Research objective

The main objective of this research is to identify the key dimensions of OCB in the Iranian healthcare Industry. In order to achieve the main objective, all of the research questions should be answered. Besides, the authors would like to define the best dimension amongst the 5 dimensions of OCB.

Thus, the supporting objectives are as followings:

1. To identify whether there is a positive relationship between Altruism and OCB in the Iranian healthcare industry.

2. To identify whether there is a positive relationship between Conscientiousness and OCB in the Iranian healthcare industry.

3. To identify whether there is a positive relationship between Sportsmanship and OCB in the Iranian healthcare industry.

4. To identify whether there is a positive relationship between Courtesy and OCB in the Iranian healthcare industry.

5. To identify whether there is a positive relationship between Civic Virtue and OCB in the Iranian healthcare industry.

6. To identify the best dimension of OCB in the Iranian healthcare industry.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Quantitative approach

This study is based on a quantitative approach, and involved the distribution of questionnaires. It is worth mentioning that distributing the questionnaires was difficult for two reasons; firstly, some of the employees of Iranian health centers saw the questionnaires as an invasion of their privacy, and the step was also impossible without the permission of the human resource managers of the healthcare centers. Secondly, during the distribution procedure, the authors found that the term “OCB” was not clearly understood by the employees, who needed the term to be explained. With the permission of the hospital managers, 152 questionnaires were distributed randomly among different occupational groups (nurses, managers, doctors and others). In addition, data collection was carried out with the help of the human resource managers in each of the healthcare centers.

3.2 Questionnaire

In this research, Organ’s 1990 (Organ et al., 1990) model will be used. LePine et al. (2002) stated that the scales developed by Organ et al. in 1990 attracted the attention of researchers who are concerned with OCB; the scales developed by Organ et al. (1990) have been used in numerous studies, thus making it the most utilized scale of OCB (LePine et al., 2002).

As outlined in the literature review, Organ et al. (1990) developed a scale for measuring OCB. This 24-item scale includes five dimensions: altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy and civic virtue. The scale for each of four dimensions which are altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship and courtesy has five items. But the scale related to civic virtue has four items. (Organ et al., 1990)

3.3 Data validation method

The method used within the present research is based on a quantitative approach involving the distribution of questionnaires and the analysis of data using IBM SPSS Version 18. SPSS is a software package that is used for conducting different kinds of statistical tests (Coakes & Steed, 2009). In order to validate the data of this research: Firstly, a pilot test will be conducted in order to ensure the reliability of the questionnaires in the Iranian healthcare industry. Secondly, for answering research questions of this research linear simple bivariate correlation tests will be conducted. Next, a linear standard regression analysis will be run to elucidate the overall relationship between OCB and its dimensions. And a linear stepwise regression analysis will be conducted in order to identify the most salient factor or dimension of OCB.

3.4 Reliability test

The Cronbach's alpha values were measured separately for each dimension of OCB, and the OCB scale was then measured as well. The Cronbach's alpha value for the overall OCB questionnaire was .863, this represented sufficient reliability to conduct the study. Table 1 indicates the Cronbach's alpha results obtained via the SPSS software.

Table 1: Reliability test

Dimension	Cronbach's alpha value	N
Altruism	.866	5
Conscientiousness	.790	5
Sportsmanship	.782	5
Courtesy	.691	5
Civic virtue	.959	4
OCB	.863	24

4. Results

In order to answer RQs, simple bivariate correlation tests, and standard and stepwise regression analyses were conducted for OCB and its dimensions.

From the correlation test between each dimension and OCB, it was found that all of the dimensions have a positive relationship with OCB. Table 2 contains the results of the correlation test for OCB and its dimensions.

Table 2: Correlation test for OCB and its dimensions

	Altruism	Conscientiousness	Sportsmanship	Courtesy	Civic virtue
OCB	R=0.712	R=0.695	R=0.331	R=0.537	R=0.712
N	152	152	152	152	152

Note: Pearson's correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

Regarding the standard regression analysis for OCB and its overall dimensions, all of the dimensions were found to have a positive coefficient beta. This indicated support for the research questions; therefore, RQ1, RQ2, RQ3, RQ4 and RQ5 are answered. Table 3 contains information about the standard regression analysis for OCB and its overall dimensions.

Table 3: Standard regression analysis for OCB and its overall dimensions

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. error	Beta		
(Constant)	4.316E-16	.000		.000	1.000
Altruism	.208	.000	.280	2.037E8	.000
Conscientiousness	.208	.000	.374	2.600E8	.000
Sportsmanship	.208	.000	.343	3.046E8	.000
Courtesy	.208	.000	.298	2.536E8	.000
Civic virtue	.167	.000	.375	2.916E8	.000

Based on stepwise regression analysis among the OCB dimensions, civic virtue, which had a 0.405 coefficient beta, is the most salient dimension of OCB, and its contribution to the determination of OCB is more significant in comparison with other dimensions. Therefore, RQ6 is answered. Table 4 contains the results related to stepwise regression analysis for OCB and its overall dimensions.

Table 4: Stepwise regression analysis for OCB and its overall dimensions

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.613	.183		8.834	.000
Altruism	.530	.043	.712	12.429	.000
2 (Constant)	1.277	.136		9.414	.000
Altruism	.388	.033	.521	11.650	.000
Civic virtue	.231	.020	.521	11.636	.000
3 (Constant)	.707	.116		6.107	.000
Altruism	.386	.025	.519	15.343	.000
Civic virtue	.233	.015	.524	15.481	.000
Sportsmanship	.203	.019	.334	10.604	.000
4 (Constant)	.511	.086		5.916	.000
Altruism	.282	.021	.379	13.741	.000
Civic virtue	.180	.012	.405	15.105	.000
Sportsmanship	.231	.014	.381	16.312	.000
Conscientiousness	.191	.017	.342	11.428	.000
5 (Constant)	3.325E-16	.000		.000	1.000
Altruism	.208	.000	.280	2.110E8	.000
Civic virtue	.167	.000	.375	3.020E8	.000
Sportsmanship	.208	.000	.343	3.155E8	.000
Conscientiousness	.208	.000	.374	2.693E8	.000
Courtesy	.208	.000	.298	2.627E8	.000

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Major conclusions

According to the findings, the most significant dimensions of OCB can be highlighted to managers in the Iranian healthcare industry. All of the five dimensions of OCB have a positive relationship with OCB: altruism and courtesy can be grouped under individual-directed behavior, while sportsmanship, civic virtue and conscientiousness fall into organization-directed behavior. Based on the results, employees in the Iranian healthcare industry participate in both individual- and organization-directed behavior.

For individual-directed behavior, managers should motivate and inject a sense of courtesy among employees in the Iranian healthcare industry; for organization-directed behavior, managers should encourage a sense of sportsmanship and conscientiousness.

In conclusion, based on the results and the model used in this study, there are two significant dimensions for OCB in the Iranian healthcare industry: civic virtue and altruism.

5.2 Limitations and future research

This research is restricted in terms of the size of the sample and the model used. The study was conducted among six different healthcare centers in Tehran, Iran. The authors of this research faced significant problems during the questionnaire distribution, for three reasons. Firstly, the human resource managers of the healthcare centers contacted, and believed that the questionnaires represented a kind of invasion of privacy. Secondly, during the questionnaire distribution, it was found that employees within the Iranian healthcare industry did not have sufficient information and knowledge about OCB to complete the questionnaires by themselves, so there was a need to describe OCB to them. Thirdly, during the distribution procedure, the authors faced confidentiality issues arising from the conservative behavior of some of the employees.

The fact that the research was conducted in Tehran is also a limitation of this research; in future, the authors recommend that the scope could be extended to cover the whole of Iran. Employees in the Iranian healthcare industry in different cities have different cultures, which will increase the scope of future research.

For future research, Organ's model could be expanded through exploratory research.

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