

The Impact of Job Characteristics on Organizational Citizenship Behavior

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the impact of job characteristics on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) through a field study among employees from the Syrian private banks. A total sample of 158 employees is selected. The results of the research show that there is a significant positive impact of job characteristics dimensions (autonomy, feedback, job significance, and skill variety) on OCB, while there is no significant impact of job characteristics dimension (job identity) on OCB.

KEYWORDS: Job Characteristics, Autonomy, Feedback, Job Significance, Skill Variety, Job Identity, Organizational Citizenship Behavior.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The desire of organizations to develop the practices of human resources management has contributed to an increased competition for efficient human resources, which ensures the growth and the success of organizations as the skilled workforce is the fundamental component for such objective. The focus of strengthening organizational citizenship behaviors has been one of the most important challenges faced by organizations in the area of organizational behavior, where organizations that depend only on the formal behavior face problems and probability for a significant failure, thus organizations must leave an unspecified part of informal behavior to individuals so that they have the ability to deal with unexpected situations motivating the voluntary individual innovation.

Based on above, organizational citizenship behavior is one of the most important behaviors targeted by the organizations because of its importance in achieving organizational effectiveness and high competitiveness.

Researchers recently have focused on the antecedents of OCB, and job characteristics was one of the main antecedents as many studies have shown, and according to the best knowledge of the researcher, no study has included job characteristics and OCB in one model in the Syrian context.

This paper includes: Introduction in section one, literature review in section two, research hypothesis in section three, research methodology in section four, results & findings in section five, and conclusion in section six.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The first author who defined the concept of organizational citizenship behavior is Organ in 1988 “The behaviors that an employee voluntarily engages in that promote the effectiveness of the organization but are not explicitly rewarded by the organization” [1], which shows that employees engage in citizenship behavior according to their desire only, and such behavior is not included in their formal duties.

In the study of Polat, there are 5 dimensions of OCB including altruism, courtesy, conscientiousness, sportsmanship and civic virtue. By altruism he means “helping colleagues to perform their job”, courtesy means “helping others to avoid potential problems”, conscientiousness means “performing job according to the rules”, sportsmanship means “protecting team interests and avoiding team conflicts” and civic virtue means “high level of interest for the organization and high level of loyalty to the organization”[2].

By Bateman and Organ, there are two reasons for this kind of behavior. “First, it is considered by social exchange theory that people want to return the favor if they are satisfied with job conditions so they behave the best they can. And the second one is the fact that more satisfied people tend to fulfill OCB”[3].

Regarding one of the main antecedents of OCB included in this research, job characteristics are a result of job design, Hackman and Oldham defined job characteristics as “a set of environmental variables that are widely thought to be important causes of employee affect and behavior” [4], and according to Droar, “the concept of job characteristics model focuses on designing a job so that it motivates a person”[5].

Hackman and Oldham’s Job Characteristics model is based on five different aspects of job, these aspects are: skill variety, job identity, job significance, autonomy, and feedback. “Skill variety: the degree to

which a job requires a variety of different activities in carrying out the work, which involve the use of a number of different skills and talents of the person”, “Task identity: the degree to which the job requires completion of a whole and identifiable piece of work; that is doing a job from beginning to end with a visible outcome”, “Task significance: the degree to which the job has a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people, whether in the immediate organization or in the external environment”, “Autonomy: the degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out”, “Feedback: the degree to which carrying out the work activities required by the job results in the individual obtaining direct and clear information about the effectiveness of his or her performance” [6].

In the study of Ajgaonkar (2012) which was conducted on a sample of workers in the Indian industrial sector, and examined the relationship between job characteristics and OCB, the study found that when providing greater opportunity for the employees to use many different skills, and experience greater freedom to choose the appropriate method in performing their duties, and enriched roles completeness letting the employees perform the task from the beginning to the end, as well as knowing the clear results of their performance and the impact of their work on others and on the organization as a whole, it was reflected in showing a higher level of organizational citizenship behaviors [7].

The studies of Farooqui (2012) -which examined the impact of job characteristics on OCB in the public universities in Lahore, Pakistan [8]- and Purvanova, Bono, and Dzieweczynski (2006) -which was conducted in two aviation facilities on a sample of managers and workers [9]- also found a direct and positive impact of job characteristics and OCB.

Lin, Li, and Hsiao (2012) examined the same relationship in two hospitals in northern Taiwan on 380 nurses, and the results showed that OCB is higher when the nurses used a variety of skills, had the freedom to choose the way they perform their duties, and performed the tasks from the beginning to the end, in addition to feeling the importance of their tasks on others [10].

III. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The main hypothesis of this research is:H1. Job characteristics have a significant impact on OCB.

Accordingly, Sub-hypotheses were developed as follows:

H1.a. Skill variety has a significant impact on OCB.

H1.b. Job significance has a significant impact on OCB.

H1.c. Autonomy has a significant impact on OCB.

H1.d. Feedback has a significant impact on OCB.

H1.e. Job identity has a significant impact on OCB.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Data collection and sample

Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary data were collected through comprehensive literature review. The primary data were collected from private banks in Damascus city. A total sample of 158 employees was selected from the banking sector. A related questionnaire to the study variables was the main tool of the study.

4.2. Measures

The questionnaire included three sections, the first section is the basic demographic information, the second one is job characteristics, and the third one is OCB. A 5-point Likert scale format was used, and the scores on the scale ranges from 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree.

Job Characteristics scale:

To measure job characteristics, a scale developed by Hackman, J.R., & Oldham, Greg R. (1974) [11] was used in this study. The scale consists of five factors, skill variety (5 items, reported reliability for 0.76), job identity (4 items, reported reliability for 0.76), job significance (4 items, reported reliability for 0.67), autonomy (4 items, reported reliability for 0.81), and feedback (5 items, reported reliability for 0.77).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior scale:

To measure OCB, a scale developed by Podsakoff et al (1990) [12] was used in this study. The scale consists of five factors, conscientiousness (5 items, reported reliability for 0.64), sportsmanship (5 items, reported reliability for 0.78), civic virtue (5 items, reported reliability for 0.80), courtesy (5 items, reported reliability for 0.71), and altruism (5 items, reported reliability for 0.75).

V. RESULTS & FINDINGS

Table 1 shows the means and standard deviations of job characteristics dimensions. Table 2 shows the means and standard deviations of OCB dimensions. Table 3 shows the results of a stepwise regression analysis of the impact of job characteristics dimensions on OCB.

Table 1. Means and standard deviations of job characteristics dimensions

Dimension	N	Mean	Std. deviation
Skill variety	158	4.33	.509
Job identity	158	4.04	.731
Job significance	158	4.08	.601
Autonomy	158	4.01	.812
Feedback	158	4.12	.574
Job characteristics	158	4.12	.505

Table 1 showshigh levels of job characteristics that the mean values of all the dimensions of job characteristics are higher than 3.40.

Table 2. Means and standard deviations of OCB dimensions

Dimension	N	Mean	Std. deviation
Conscientiousness	158	4.19	.472
Sportsmanship	158	4.26	.619
Civic virtue	158	4.14	.648
Courtesy	158	4.36	.422
Altruism	158	4.35	.429
OCB	158	4.26	.404

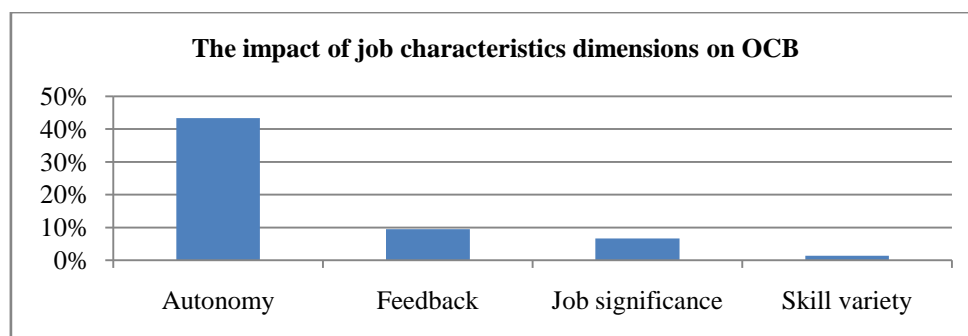
Table2 showshigh levels of OCB that the mean values of all the dimensions of OCB are higher than 3.40.

Table 3. Stepwise regression analysis results: job characteristics dimensions on OCB

Steps	Sig.	Adj. R square
1. Constant Autonomy	.000 .000	.434
2. Constant Autonomy Feedback	.000 .000 .000	.529
3. Constant Autonomy Feedback Job significance	.000 .000 .000 .000	.595
4. Constant Autonomy Feedback Job significance Skill variety	.000 .001 .000 .000 .010	.609

In table 3, a model with 4 steps was carried out and explained more than 60% of the variance on OCB (Adj. R square = 0.609). This model shows that four dimensions of job characteristics have significant impact on OCB, and they are respectively according to the highest score of each one: autonomy explained (43.4%) of the variance on OCB, feedback explained (9.5%), job significance explained (6.6%), and skill variety explained (1.4%), and this model is significant at the 5% level. The results also show that job characteristics dimension (Job identity) was excluded from the model which means that job identity has no significant impact on OCB. Accordingly, H1 is partially supported, and the results of the sub-hypotheses are as follows:

Sub-hypothesis	The result
H1.a. Skill variety has a significant impact on OCB	Accepted
H1.b. Job significance has a significant impact on OCB	Accepted
H1.c. Autonomy has a significant impact on OCB	Accepted
H1.d. Feedback has a significant impact on OCB	Accepted
H1.e. Job identity has a significant impact on OCB	Rejected



The results show that job characteristics dimensions (skill variety, job significance, autonomy, and feedback) significantly affect OCB, and these results agreed with (Farooqui, 2012), (Purvanova, Bono, and Dzieweczynski, 2006), (Ajgaonkar, 2012) and (Lin, Li, and Hsiao, 2012) studies in the impact of job characteristics dimensions (skill variety, job significance, and autonomy) on OCB, but no impact was shown in this study for job characteristics dimension (job identity) as (Farooqui, 2012), (Ajgaonkar, 2012), and (Purvanova, Bono, and Dzieweczynski, 2006) studies found, and there is an impact of job characteristics dimension (feedback) in this study which is different with the result of (Lin, Li, and Hsiao, 2012) which found that there is no impact of job characteristics dimension (feedback) in OCB.

VI. CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, the present study found that organizations can focus on job design taking in consideration the following:

- 1- Enhance the freedom in an individual's role which shows a high level of organization's confidence in the employees' knowledge and competencies.
- 2- Provide clear and regular feedback, that the organization is concerned with the self-development of the employees.
- 3- The existence of high task significance that the employees feel the proud about their role, and have the pride to tell others about their importance in the organization.
- 4- Offer a high skill variety use that the employees have the opportunity to improve their skills, which lead to self-growth.

The mentioned managerial practices in return lead to a higher level of voluntary positive behavior towards the organization due to the employees' desire to get involved in the behaviors that lead to the success and growth of the organization.

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