

“STRATEGIC USE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZEN BEHAVIOUR” A TOOL FOR GAINING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Zeb Jan 

Dean Management Sciences, Army Public College for Management and Sciences, Pakistan
shrprofessional@gmail.com

Asia Gul

Faculty Management Sciences, Army Public College for Management and Sciences, Pakistan

Abstract

This paper focuses on the strategic use of the OCB by the organizations which can help them to compete in the market more sustainably. Though OCB is considered as an extra role by the employee but its consequences can be pivotal in overcoming the discrepancies in resources when sheer commitment is the instrument. This research has studied the impact of OCB on Competitive Advantage of the organization with the expected mediation by the employee commitment a crucial deciding factor in high performance. The facts providing quantitative support to this study have been analyzed on SPSS. The results have shown a very high correlation of the factors understudy thus, maximizing the validity of the idea as discussed in the paper. Given the analysis carried out in this study, OCB may not only be considered as a side phenomenon but could be integrated into strategic development of the policies and procedures for the organizational management.

Keywords: OCB, Competitive Advantage, Employee Commitment and Organizational Behaviour

INTRODUCTION

Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) is that extra role behaviour of the employees that they start exhibiting when they develop a close association with their organization of work. They try to create a comfortable environment for their co-workers and support them in their work and don't complain about small problems that may arise at their work place. This kind of attitude

which encourages the employee for the extra role behaviour becomes instrumental in improving employees' performance and overall organizational performance. OCB among employees make the organization stable by reducing turnover rate and attracting new employees. The over enhancement in performance contributes to the gaining competitive edge in the market and hence, promoting the image of the organization.

This research takes into consideration to study that OCB can be how much helpful in gaining competitive advantage for the company. Though OCB has no contractual backing but by establishing a correlation of significant factors can bring a change in the brand promotion strategies of the company. This may also pave way for promoting a thought about spending a little more on improvement of internal environment within the organization and that can actually enable the company from spending a lot on external campaigns for the brand promotion.

According to Farh et.al (1990) creating attractive incentives is difficult for an organization compare to those which help employees stay motivated at work place and continue to give technical excellence in performance. Pandey et.al (2008) has termed OCB as helpful extra role behaviour which is embedded in individuals' concern for peers. According to Mossholder (2005) "that helpful behaviours towards co-workers have significant value for a number of important outcomes i.e. reducing employee turnover (Pandey et al., 2008). Kim (2006), Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994), Podsakoff , MacKenzie, & Ahearne (1997) further added that OCB significantly contributes to organizational performance. Further augmenting the notion, Pandey (2008) deliberates that a support from a co-worker based on the principle of reciprocity would guarantee a same kind of support from the receiver and when required it would generate a supportive work environment in response. A supportive attitude is what makes and team flourish and a supportive work environment is what is required for the successful accomplishment of the team assignment.

The theoretical framework of this study takes OCB as independent variable which has been studies through its sub-variables including 1. altruism ,2. Courtesy, 3. Conscientiousness, 4. Sportsmanship and 5. Civic Virtue. It is also assumed that the level of intensity of these variables may vary with different individuals, in addition to the fact that all the five variables may or may not seen in every individual at the same time with the same intensity. Individuals demonstrating a reasonable intensity of three or more attributes of OCB have been considered as suitable cases for this study.

The theoretical construct of this study states that in the presence of the attributes of OCB individual's performance improves, the team performance is high and creativity and/innovation flourishes. All these factors results in promoting the competitive advantage of the company and are key factors in promoting brand image. Employee commitment has been taken

as mediator in this study with the perspective that commitment can further enhance the impact of OCB.

Newton, Blanton & Will (2008) explain that organizational citizenship behaviour is normally appreciated by co-workers and hence promotes a specific kind of organizational culture that encourages individuals to make extra efforts while performing at work place. In this culture it does not matter what the source of motivation is.

Furthermore, Newton et al (2008) explain this kind of culture by saying that it features those practices which creates a feeling among the employees. Whenever, employees develop a strong association with the organization only than they volunteer for tasks that are not part of their job responsibilities, i.e. their support to peers and to put extra efforts in their work. Such employees are more innovative and creative and in their presence flow of positive energies are more frequent within the organization due to their positive attitude.

Farh et.al (1990) argues that when the individuals witness procedural fairness within an organization, they feel satisfied as indirectly it reflects that the organization respects its employees. He further adds that such kind of procedural justice leads to OCB.

Individual that is more satisfied, exhibit higher level of OCB and hence provide a greater support to their co-workers. This increases cohesiveness among the employees and help in developing stronger teams.

Schein (1985) labeled this kind of culture as support culture which he elaborates as the contribution of the people out of the sense of commitment and solidarity characterised by specific traits of mutual trust and support.

According to Armstrong (1999) sense of belonging emerges out of ownership feeling, which could be developed by involving employees in decision making. He further adds that this gives them the feeling that their voice is being heard and that they are effectively contributing to the success of the company. The success of organization citizenship behaviour practices mainly depend on extent to which an organization values such behaviours and the consideration for such behaviours while they chalk out strategies for profitability and sustainable competitive advantage (Werner,2000).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organization Citizenship Behaviour

Committed employees contributes to better organizational performance with low turnover rate and absenteeism (Ostroff, 1992), which enhances the reputation of the organization as stable and with better future. According to Organ (1988) and Schnake (1991) OCB has no formal backing by the organization but results in affectivity and efficiency. Organizations are always

struggle against their competitors, therefore, further adding, Organ (1988) and Schnake (1991) consider Altruism as an extra role behaviour, but such an Altruism contributes to the brand image of the organization. According to Eren and Larisa (2007) studied relationship between MBO and OCB which established that a communication of clearer expectation may reduce the OCB level but a positive feedback on the formal performance promotes Altruistic OCB and Compliance OCB.

Gautam et al. (2005) highlights performance indices are collective results of skill, employee efforts and organizational context and organizational context is created by attitudes of the employee. Positive attitude would definitely be reflected in better contextual performance of the organization.

According to Yen & Niehoff (2004) when the employees go a step further beyond their required role it benefits the organization internally and externally. They have identified certain predictors as-

“(1) altruism -- the helping of an individual coworker on a task, (2) courtesy -- alerting others in the organization about changes that may affect their work, (3) conscientiousness -- carrying out one’s duties beyond the minimum requirements, (4) sportsmanship -- refraining from complaining about trivial matters, and (5) civic virtue -- participating in the governance of the organization. “

Most of the studies carried out on OCB have focused on relationship between OCB and individual performance (i. e. MacKenzie et al., 1991, 1993; Werner, 1994, George & Bettenhausen, 1990; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1994) or with group performance (i.e. Karambayya, 1990; Podsakoff et al., 1997) but this study takes it a step further by studying its impact on organizational image outside the organization itself.

Yen and Neihoff (2004) also consider impact of OCB on customer perception of quality of service. According to them OCB in a team enhances the capabilities of a team with its synergetic effect on team performance and hence when such a team resolves to customers’ issues their performance level is very high.

Davis (1994) and Ferrero (1994) referring to a case studies in retailing and services business established a direct relation between customer satisfaction and employee cooperative behaviours. Further adding, “Conscientious employees who maintain predictable work schedules increase the reliability of the service. Such reliability will help retain customers and increase word-of-mouth marketing” (Berry& Parasuraman, 1991).

Trust is a key determinant in fostering employees’ organization citizenship behaviours as concluded by (Wong, Ngo & Wong, 2006). Going global and reaching diverse societies demand managers to attend to a variety of cultures’ and values while addressing company’s own

citizenship behaviour and training of employees for mutual business gains (Lin & Ho, 2010). Further adding, businesses need to monitor and improve employees' behaviours regularly for profitability purposes. Managers should try their best in maintaining their healthy relations with their subordinates by allowing them to share their problems, ideas and information in accomplishing the desired objectives (Deluga, 1994).

Defining organizational citizenship behaviour Organ (1997) explains OCB as "performance that supports the social and psychological environment in which task performance takes place." Organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) is employees' willing actions to perform beyond their actual jobs and roles with high level of commitment contributing to organizations' productivity. While encouraging such behaviours, individuals' personality traits, companies' cultures and quality of work-life are factors that enhance OCB for organizational success (Chien, 2003).

The social exchange relationship is also linked with organization citizenship behavioural traits (Schroeder, 2010). Reciprocation of good and positive gestures, and acknowledgment of extra efforts in accomplishing tasks help managers in creating job commitment among employees leading to business progression (Dunlop & Lee, 2004). Values like organizational justice with its three pronged approach i.e. procedural, distributive and interactional justice also stimulate organization citizenship behaviour (Özbek, Yoldash, & Tang, 2015).

According to Turnipseed & Rassuli (2005) the employees' having organization citizenship behaviour engage in constructive activities like attending extra trainings, helping colleagues in their work, accepting more duties for organization wider effectiveness in sustaining competitive advantage.

Employee Commitment

Trust in management and human resource practices affect organizational commitment and support (Whitener, 2001). Evidences exist that when employees trust managers they feel pride and experience that their efforts are contributing towards companies' as well as their own success (Lockwood, 2007).

Meyer, Stanley & Parfyonova (2012) have defined three main components of commitment i.e. Affective commitment (AC), normative commitment (NC) and continuance commitment (CC) for unifying individuals and organizations. They describe affective commitment as employees' emotional attachment causing to stay with the organization, normative commitment is employees' sense of moral duty and obligation to serve, and continuance commitment is an awareness of the costs associated with job switching. Other components of employee commitment such as work or job commitment and career commitment

are also vital in establishing employee loyalty with organizations (Mueller, Wallace & Price, 1992).

Competitive Advantage

To order achieve sustainable competitive advantage through employees Bartlett and Ghoshal (2013) have shared three main tasks building, linking and bonding. Building employees capacities and providing them constant feedback and coaching. Develop linkages based on motivation and massive social interaction for transfer and embedding knowledge system wide. Bonds in organizations can only foster if senior executives and managers realize that 'the company is more than a mere economic entity; it is also a social institution through which people act together holding the sense of association to achieve a common purpose' (Bartlett& Ghoshal,2013).

The current trends are to attain human capital–based competitive advantages and therefore, HR managers must attend to develop employee skills, commitment, culture and team work for sustainable competitive advantage (Barney and Wright, 1997). Considering Humans role in the businesses on can say that it is a kind of capital that can take any shape/role i.e that of a financial resource, a vehicle to attain an end, a means to pass on the data bank or a tool to project and manage the future of the business. This high level of elasticity in the human role makes it vital for the success of a business, but this elasticity is possible when the employees are committed. This study attends to OCB as it is considered a promoting force in creating commitment among the employees that enables the organizations to gain an edge over their competitors. Following is the theoretical construct for this study.

THEORETICAL CONSTRUCT

Definition of Variables

Independent Variable: OCB

OCB will be studied from five different perspective including Altruism, Conscientiousness, Courtesy, Sportsmanship and Civic Virtues. This variable could be defined as the ex-role behaviour of the employees within the organization

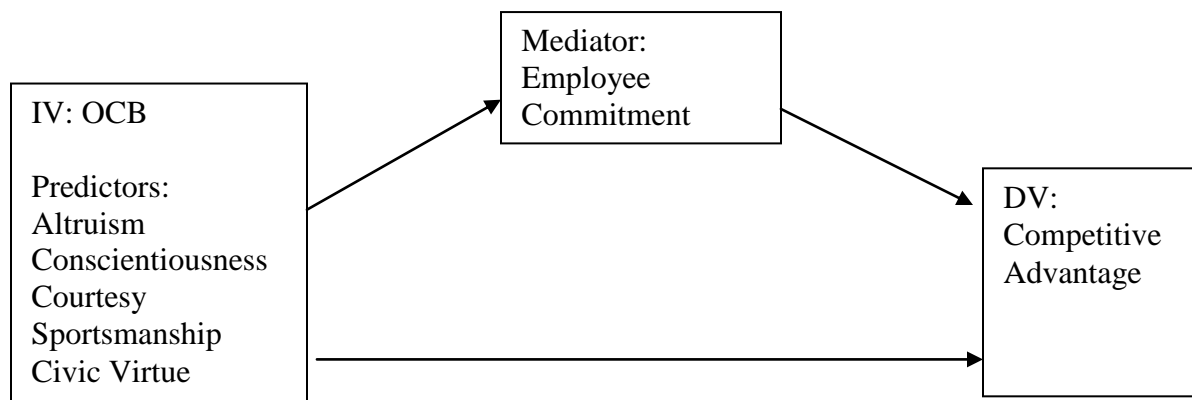
Dependent Variable: Competitive Advantage

This factor could be defined as the advantage the organization has over its competitors leading to the promotion of its business in the market.

Mediating Variable:: Employee Commitment

This may be defined as the commitment of the employees to the organization of work to stay and protect it from any unacceptable situation that it may confront during their stay

Figure 1. Theoretical Framework



Hypotheses

Direct Effect

H₁: Stronger the OCB, higher would be its Competitive Advantage to the firm

Mediation

H₂: Higher the OCB among employees, stronger would be employee commitment to the firm

H₃: Stronger the Employee Commitment, Higher would be the Competitive Advantage of the Firm

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Study is descriptive in nature. This study has been conducted through Questionnaire survey which was developed in light of the variables of this study.

Sampling

The sample size of valid cases for this study is 56. The target population includes employees working at the management level within the organization having at least more than six months affiliation with that company. The purpose of such a delineation of respondents by period of association is because individuals who have spent some time in an organization can have reliable response given those specific contextual elements are known to them. The sample

included cases from variety of sectors working at various levels of hierarchies, hence eliminating the sector n level specific biases in the data. Furthermore, the sample also included representation from both the genders sects further reducing the biases in results. Many of the experienced respondents were having work history with different sectors thus further reducing the effects of stereotyping of specific roles and work setups.

Questionnaire

This study is using questionnaire for primary data collection with the items scaled on likert scale. Questionnaire included total number of 20 items. This tool was put through pilot testing which showed a total reliability of ...%. individual reliability of the tool was also checked for consistency.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

In order to prove the relationship between Organization Citizenship Behaviour (OCB), Job Commitment (JC) and Competitive advantage (CA) this research further provides statistical evidence using SPSS 18 version. Descriptive statistics, reliability, correlation, regression and mediation are used

Tools Reliability Test

It shows the extent to which the tool is without bias and consistent across time. Reliability also point out the goodness of a measure of the tool used in measuring the concept (Sekaran, 2002). The reliability coefficient Chronbach alpha is used in measuring the questionnaire goodness and if the value is greater than 0.9 it is considered excellent, between 0.7- 0.9 is good (George, & Mallery, 2003; Kline, 2000; Nunnally, 1978). The reliability coefficient of all three scale used in the research was greater than .8 which means tool is replicable for other researches (Gul, Akbar and Jan, 2012).

The initial data in the questionnaire that has not being numbered namely the basic profile of the respondents for the use of researcher's understanding of the population. Therefore, this part of the questionnaire has been tested for reliability. The reliability test of the scale has been conducted on the items that are numbered and has been considered for drawing the tests results of this study i.e. OCB, EC and CA. These items have also been tested separately for scale reliability of items-wise as well as group-wise.

Table 1: Item-Wise Reliability Results- Chronbach Alpha

Variables	Number of Items	Chronbach Alpha
Organization Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)	10	0.941
Employee Commitment (EC)	05	0.863
Competitive Advantage (CA)	05	0.928

Descriptive Statistics

The level of Organization Citizenship Behaviour, Employee Commitment and Competitive Advantage is also measured and indicated as follow:

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the data

Variables	Mean	Min	Max	S.D
OCB	3.50	1.00	4.90	1.15
EC	3.56	1.00	5.00	1.16
CA	3.53	1.00	5.00	1.23

N=56

Mean value 3.50 of Organization Citizenship Behaviour signifies that organizations practice OCB. The standard deviation is 1.15 showing the variability in the data. Mean value 3.56 exhibit employees' job commitment. The standard deviation is 1.16 showing the variability in the data. Mean value 3.53 shows that organizations are striving and sustaining competitive advantage. The standard deviation is 1.23 showing the variability in the data.

Correlation Statistics

Table 3: Pearson Product-moment Correlations

Variable	OCB	EC	CA
OCB	1	-	-
EC	0.925**	1	-
CA	0.885**	0.884**	1

n=56 /** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Organization citizenship behaviour is positively and statistically significantly correlated with Employee Commitment ($r = .925$, $p < 0.01$) which reveals that both variables move in same direction i.e. if OCB decreases so does JC and if OCB increases JC will also increase. Job commitment is positively and directly correlated with competitive advantage ($r = .844$, $P < 0.01$) which indicates that if level of EC increases in organizations then level of CA will also increase. Likewise positive and significant relationship exists between OCB and CA ($r = .885$, $P < 0.01$)

indicating that these two variables move in same direction. Correlation matrix exhibits the strong and significant relationship between OCB, EC and CA.

Regression Statistics

Table 4: Consolidated Regression Analysis

Variables	r	r ²	beta	t	sig
OCB-EC	.925	.856	.925	13.938	.000
OCB-CA	.885	.782	.885	13.938	.000
EC-CA	.884	.782	.884	13.192	.000

*p<0.0005 N= 56

Correlation coefficient R between OCB and CA is .885 showing positive relationship between OCB and CA. The coefficient of determination (R²), denotes a measure of strength and model fit index, shows that .782 or 78.2% variation in CA is due to OCB. The value of t-statistic is 13.938 is significant (p<0.0005) and rule of thumb is if t value is greater than 2 the hypothesis is proven and in this case t value is greater than 2 hence proving the hypothesis that there is a strong relationship between organization citizenship behaviour OCB and competitive advantage CA.

Correlation coefficient R between OCB and EC is .885 showing positive relationship between OCB and CA. The coefficient of determination (R²), denotes a measure of strength and model fit index, shows that .782 or 78.2% variation in EC is due to OCB. The value of t-statistic is 13.938 is significant (p<0.0005) and rule of thumb is if t value is greater than 2 the hypothesis is proven and in this case t value is greater than 2 hence proving the hypothesis that there is a relationship between organization citizenship behaviour OCB and Employee Commitment.

Correlation coefficient R between EC and CA is .884 showing positive relationship between JC and CA. The coefficient of determination (R²), denotes a measure of strength and model fit index, shows that .782 or 78.2% variation in C A is due to EC. The value of t-statistic is 13.192 at p value <0.0005 and is an evidence of significant linear relationship between job commitment JC and competitive advantage.

Mediation Test

The mediation test for this study taking Job commitment as a mediator applies Baron and Kenny (1986) test of mediation. Mediation Steps:

1. Organization Citizenship behavior (OCB) effect on Competitive Advantage (CA).
2. OCB effect on Employee Commitment(EC).
3. EC effect on CA

4. Combined effect of OCB and EC on CA

Table 5: Summary of Mediation Analysis (OCB-JC-CA)

	R	R ²	Beta
Analysis 1 OCB on CA	0.885	0.782	0.885*
Analysis 2 OCB on EC	0.925	0.856	0.925*
Analysis 3 EC on CA	0.884	0.782	0.884*
Analysis 4 OCB and EC on CA	0.901	0.813	.462(OCB) .457 (JC)

p<0.001

The bold value of R² in analysis 4 signifies that 81.3% variation in competitive advantage is due to the combined effect of OCB and EC hence organizations should take in to account the importance of practicing OCB and EC for profitability and gaining competitive advantage. The R² value 81.3% also shows the goodness of a model and there is a full mediation in the model (Rucker, Preacher, Tomala and Petty, 2011).

The quantitative tests of the study shows that the impact of OCB is high on gaining competitive advantage, but these effect further increases after considering the role of Employee commitment in the process.

RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON FINDINGS

As highlighted earlier Human Capital of an organization is an investment that takes up different shapes in terms of its roles as needed by the organization. When the HR services are directly sold out to the customer this turns into finances, and when the HR is coordinated and integrated in a way to execute plans or projects then Human Capital becomes a Vehicle for achieving the targets. When the HR is used for developing strategies and prediction of future markets then it becomes the source of identifying the future path and destiny of the business. Similarly there may be data banks in organization but the real source of information and in-depth knowledge is the HR of the organization. Moving forward on this idea we can say that besides having the right kind of resource for running a successful business commitment among those employees is also important. Such kind of commitment can create innovation in work patterns that will help the organization to effectively translate its objectives into output. The other factors such as salary and perks can motivate employees for high performance but it cannot buy creativity and dedication. Furthermore, this could be conveniently replicated by the competitor organization.

How to develop strategies for promoting OCB among the employees that would promote the dual cause of cost cutting on marketing campaign as well as brining stability on sustainable basis? is an un-trodden avenue which this study addresses.

It is has been established that in order to create commitment among the employees the organizations should focus on promotion of citizenship behaviours among the employees. Given that psychological attachment can trigger the urge for contribution among the employees the organization should create the sense of ownership among them. Citizenship Behaviour can be promoted through the following interventions-

- a) Employees' care cell should be created where an immediate response should be designed for any kind of employee problems or grievances.
- b) Though OCB is metaphysical concept but this could be translated into a practical one by lying down Citizenship rules and regulations
- c) Instead of leaving the process OCB and employee commitment to natural period of evolution, the organizations should arrange for such trainings where employees' psychological grooming could be expedited, so as to pace up the process of OCB maturity.

The above recommendations may seem to be an extra cost temporarily, but the speedy maturity of the OCB process would reduce the cost at intermediate and later stages of the process.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study is limited to the internal factors of the organization which measures Competitive Advantage in terms of employees' behaviours that can bring an edge to the company while competing with its competitors. Customers' opinion of the company's product or services has not been directly measured in this study. Employees' commitment has been taken as a guarantor of the customer satisfaction considering that such kind of commitment will ensure the level of performance by the organization that will result in customer satisfaction.

WAY FORWARD

The approach towards OCB requires a change and should be taken up as strategic tool for promotion. The detailed impact of different strategies of OCB should be studied in order to substantiate the knowledge on any such interventions which will help the businesses to choose a suitable strategy as per their needs.

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ANNEXURE

I - Strategic Use of Organizational Citizenship Behaviour- A Tool for Gaining Competitive Advantage

Questionnaire

Sr.# _____

Name _____ Organization: _____

Job Title: _____ Department: _____

Length of Service in Current Organization: _____

Note: The rating scale shows increase in strength starting from 1 to 5

Sr#	Questions	1	2	3	4	5
	OCB					
1	Comfort level with your work environment					
2	Intend to stay with the organization					
3	Satisfaction with your job					
4	Satisfied with your supervisor					
5	Relation with your peers					
6	Relation with your subordinate if any					
7	Provide support to your peers					
8	Provide guidance to your juniors					
9	Share ideas for change in working patterns					
10	Protect organization's reputation					
	Job Commitment					
11	Provide guidance to your juniors					
12	Share information with your colleagues					
13	Willingness to work extra hours					
14	Willingness to work in a team					
15	Willingness to improve your output					
16	Volunteer for extra assignments					
	Competitive Advantage					
17	How much you are satisfied with the market reputation of your company					
18	your product and services are being appreciated in the Market					
19	Your company has recently shown progress in profitability					
20	People like to work for your company					
21	Your role in developing the image of your company					