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# The Relationships among Work Support, Organizational Commitment, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior of Part-time Employees in the Restaurant Industry

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THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG WORK SUPPORT, ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT, AND  
ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR OF PART-TIME EMPLOYEES IN THE RESTAURANT  
INDUSTRY

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#### Abstract

Part-time employees' work behaviors are the most pressing issue in the hospitality industry. The purpose of this study is to explore the structural relationship among perceived work support, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior in regard to part-time employees in the restaurant industry. Data analysis contained descriptive analysis and structural equation modeling. The findings proved that part-time employees are willing to show positive behaviors (e.g., organizational commitment and citizenship behavior) and are satisfied with their job when they perceive that they are receiving positive supervisor and organizational supports. Based on the findings, restaurant operators could consider paying more attention to, and showing more concern for, part-time employees in order to enhance their positive work behaviors and job satisfaction.

Key Words: part-time employee, organizational support, supervisor support, organizational commitment, citizenship behavior, restaurant industry

#### Introduction

A contingent workforce offers various advantages for a food service institution, such as flexible shifts and arrangements, and less expense of personnel, thereby resulting in cost savings (Dan & James, 2002). Based on the consideration of personnel expenses, the hiring of part-time employees is seen to be economical, especially in the labor-intensive restaurant industry. In fact, the part-time employee is the source of human resource capital which the

restaurant industry prefers to engage (Nollen& Axel, 1995) and they play a central role in delivering service to customers (Stamper & Van Dyne, 2003).

Levinson (1965) suggested that employees consider supervisors' behaviors and actions to be representative of the organization itself. Based on Babin and Boles' (1996) study, supervisor support (SS) not only can reduce employees' job stress, but also can enhance their job satisfaction. Furthermore, organizational support (OS) is defined as how employees perceive the organization's consideration of them and how the manager demonstrates care for their personal contribution (Eisenberger, Huntingtonk, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). Eisenberge, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro (1990) wrote that employees exhibit their work attitudes and behaviors in order to reflect the relationship between them and their organization.

Organizational commitment (OC) for an employee is his/her attachment to and identification with the organization (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Moreover, Allen and Meyer (1990) had a similar definition of OC, which referred to the employees' personal feelings toward and involvement in the organization. Eisenberger et al. (1986) indicated there is a strong relationship between employees' psychological affection and their awareness of organizational commitment..

Normally, when employees have positive and enjoyable feelings about their work, one can say they have job satisfaction (JS) (Locke, 1976). In addition, Brown and Peterson (1993) highlighted several factors that positively affect employees' satisfaction, such as supervisors' treatment of them, salary, relationship between co-workers and customers, and so forth. Hartline and Ferrell's (1996) finding proposed that there is a positive relationship between employees' job satisfaction and service quality; also, job performance is one of the important factors relating to an employee's job satisfaction (Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985).

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is referred to 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..." (Organ 1988:4). Feather and Rauter (2004) contended that the relationship between OC and OCB is surely correlated with full-time employees, but that the relationship has less significance for part-time employees. Contrast, Van Dyne and Ang (1998) proposed that part-time employees' OCBs are conditional on their OC. Moreover, Cho and Johanson (2008) suggested that there is a strong and significant influence of OC on OCB for part-time employees.

Many empirical studies compared full-time with part-time employees, their work performance, attitude, satisfaction, turnover rate, and commitment (e.g., Cho & Johanson, 2008; Shockey & Mueller, 1994; Stamper & Van Dyne, 2003; Van Dyne & Ang, 1998). However, it is not considered appropriate to compare full-time and part-time employees in regard to their job-related attitudes, such as work performance, commitment, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, and so forth. Cho and Johanson's (2008) study indicated that fewer benefits and different treatments could also be factors affecting part-time employees' enthusiasm.

Few studies have investigated the correlation between organizational treatments and work behaviors specifically for part-time employees. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to examine the relationships among perceived work support, organizational commitment (OC), job satisfaction (JS) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) for part-time employees in the restaurant industry.

#### Methods

The research design of this study is a descriptive cross-sectional study. A self-administered and closed-ended questionnaire with ordered choice was used to survey a sample of part-time employees in the restaurant industry. Each item is selected based on previous studies and literature reviews.

The target population in this study was part-time employees working at chain and independent restaurants in a university town in the Midwest in 2010. A list of the city restaurants was obtained from the yellow pages of the local telephone book. After receiving the restaurant HR manager's permission, the questionnaires were distributed to the employees. A convenient sampling was used to distribute questionnaires to the target population. The number of valid questionnaires for analysis was 185 and represented an overall response rate of 37%. The participation was voluntary and respondents were assured anonymity.

The questionnaire consisted of seven major sections. The first section asked the respondents about their work circumstances, which include work status, job position, and working experience in the current position. Section two to section five served to measure: 1) perceived organizational support (OS); 2) perceived supervisor support (SS); 3) organizational commitment (OC); 4) organizational citizenship behavior (OCB); and 5) job satisfaction (JS). All items were measured with seven-point Likert-type scale (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree). The final section asked the respondents about their demographic characteristics. The Cronbach's alpha values of four measurements (OS, SS, OC, and OCB) were .82, .94, .93, and .94, respectively. The results showed that all variables were internally consistent.

Data analyses used to process the survey results were descriptive statistics and structural equation modeling (SEM). First, a descriptive statistical frequency distribution was used to analyze the data and to examine the distribution pattern for each variable. The second phase employed structural equation modeling analysis with MPlus to test the conceptual model of this study.

Findings

Most part-time employees served as part of the kitchen crew (41.6%) and 33 percent as wait staff. In terms of working experience in the current position, 69 respondents had worked for more than one year (37.3%) and 45 respondents had worked for five to eight months (24.3%). The majority of the respondents were male (56.2%). Approximately 58 percent of respondents were between 21 and 25 years old. About 33.5 percent of respondents held a Master’s degree and 28.1 percent of respondents had some college education. The overwhelming majority of respondents were single (93%).

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to assess the measurement model. The overall fit of the model to the data was reasonable:  $\chi^2=903.232$  with 560df;  $P< .000$ ; CFI=.95; RMSEA=.057; SRMR=.051. In addition, all of the path estimates were significant, with high factor loadings ranging from .24 to .931. After conducting CFA, structural equation modeling with MPlus was used to test the hypothesized model. The predicted relationships among SS, OS, OC, JS and OCB for part-time employees in the restaurant industry were tested. The structural model fit was:  $\chi^2 =911.170$  with 564df;  $P< .000$ ; CFI=.95; RMSEA= .058; SRMR=.053 and all paths were significant at  $P< .001$ (See Table 1).

Table 1  
Structural Path Estimates

Path Coefficients	Standardized Loading	t-value
SS → OS	.816	25.557***
OS → OC	.774	21.192***
OC → OCB	.449	5.686***
SS → OCB	.325	4.201***
OC → JS	.944	50.017***

Note: SS=supervisor support; OS= organization support; OC=organization commitment; OCB=organization citizenship behavior; JS=job satisfaction  
\*\*\* $p \leq .001$

## Conclusion and Implication

Normally, part-time employees do not have high expectations of receiving an organization's benefit packages (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Moorman & Harland, 2002). The results nevertheless indicated that part-time employees still have strong OC and are willing to show their OCB when they receive positive supervisor support and organizational support; additionally, they are satisfied with their jobs.

This study found that organizational support and supervisor support could be valuable practices which could contribute to improving part-time employees' organizational commitment and citizenship behavior. Since service quality relates closely to employees' work behaviors, this study suggests that restaurant operators should pay more attention to part-time employees and consider alternative encouragement programs or policies that might offer opportunities to highlight and reward superior achievement on the part of part-time employees.

Even though part-time employees understand that their compensation cannot be compared with that of full-time employees, the findings of this study indicate that they still show positive behaviors once they receive supports from the organization or supervisor. In conclusion, by increasing part-time employees' work behaviors and attitude, not only will customers benefit from higher-quality service, but organizations could also improve their competitive advantage and gain an enhanced reputation.

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