



Linking Organizational Structure, Job Characteristics, and Job Performance Constructs: A Proposed Framework

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Abstract

A growing emphasis has been given on employees' job performance as a source of competitive advantage to promote responsiveness in enhancing overall organizational effectiveness. Although performance depends very much on personality traits, other external factors, also known as system factors or opportunities to perform, have a significant amount of influence on employees' task and contextual performance. Constraints to perform, such as bureaucratic structure and ineffective job design, will influence individual task and contextual performance negatively. Such circumstance inadvertently hinders high organizational performance. This paper proposes that organizational structure, namely formalization and centralization, have direct effects on employee task performance and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Also, this paper posits that job characteristics, namely skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback, exert influence on employee task performance and OCB. To examine the applicability of the proposed framework, seven main propositions are identified and analyzed.

Keywords: Job performance, Organizational structure, Job characteristics, Task performance, Organizational citizenship behavior

1. Introduction

Job performance has become one of the significant indicators in measuring organizational performance in many studies (Wall, Michie, Patterson, Wood, Sheehan, Clegg, & West, 2004). Even though performance is oftentimes determined by financial figures, it can also be measured through the combination of expected behavior and task-related aspects (Motowidlo, 2003). In fact, performance that is based on an absolute value or relative judgment may reflect overall organizational performance (Gomez-Mejia, Balkin, & Cardy, 2007; Wall *et al.* 2004). Additionally, job analysis can also be used in developing performance standard required of each employee (Heneman & Judge, 2005). Job analysis specifies work behaviors and knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs) required of the job incumbents. Most importantly, Wiedower (2001) and Pincus (1986) asserted that performance measure that is based on the performance appraisal items offers higher reliability in evaluating performance.

Schmitt and Chan in Motowidlo (2003) categorized employee job performance into 'will-do' and 'can-do'. The former refers to individuals' knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) required in performing certain job and the latter denotes the motivation level that individuals may have in performing their work. On the same ground, Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994) pointed out that performance construct should consist of task performance and contextual performance. Both constructs are influenced by different factors, for instance job-related experience determines task performance while individual's personality type determines contextual performance (Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994). In a parallel fashion, Cardy and Dobbins in Williams (2002) conceptualized performance as work outcomes that relates closely to task performance, such as the quantity and quality of work done, and job relevant

behaviors that consist of behavioral aspects useful in achieving task performance (Williams, 2002). In other words, job relevant behaviors provide support in performing task-related matters. Therefore, job performance is best measured in terms of task performance and organizational citizenship behavior and it is more comprehensive to be conceptualized as job relevant behaviors needed to enhance performance-related matters.

2. Review of the literature

2.1 Task performance

According to Motowidlo (2003), scholars have given limited attention on the most appropriate concept of task performance despite the fact that an accurate definition of task performance or in-role performance is crucial before any interventions are made to improve human performance in organizations. In human resource management studies, task performance has been measured using a range of criterion measures, including supervisory ratings, productivity indexes, promotability ratings, sales total, and turnover rate. Although these indicators might be presumed to reflect performance at various degrees, Gomez-Mejia *et al.* (2007) stated that task performance should be distinguished into quality of work done, quantity of work performed, and interpersonal effectiveness. Motowidlo (2003) defined task performance or in-role behaviors as the organization's total expected value on task related proficiency of an employee. In other words, task performance is the behaviors related specifically to performing job-related matters.

Task performance can be measured in terms of the absolute value or relative judgment (Gomez-Mejia *et al.*, 2007; Wall *et al.* 2004). The former is based on the figures or financial indicators, such as productivity and profitability. Relative judgment focuses on the overall performance of an employee or organization, which is based on task-related and behavioral aspects. According to Wall *et al.* (2004), most human resource management researches adopted subjective measure of performance in tapping individual performance, which is most appropriately measured based on task related and behavioral aspects. Most importantly, subjective measure allows researchers to generalize the findings to a larger performance construct (Wall *et al.* 2004). This is in accordance to Motowidlo's (2003) assertion that task performance is best construed as a behavioral construct because it involves psychological process that is related to selection, training, motivation, and facilitating situational processes. It has also been reported that performance should be measured broadly to enhance its reliability (Chockalingam, Schmidt, & Viswesvaran, 1996) but the scope of measurement should be most specific. For example, performance measurement should be based on performance appraisal items or job analysis in order to increase both validity and reliability (Pincus, 1986; Ashton, 1998; Wiedower, 2001).

Performance Model originally introduced by Campbell explains on the determinants of performance (Williams, 2002). This model asserts that performance is a behavior determined by declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, and motivation. Declarative knowledge deals with knowing what to do or specific knowledge and skills required in performing a particular job while procedural knowledge consists of cognitive skill, psychomotor skill, self-management skill or other generic skills needed in performing all types of jobs. The third element, motivation is termed as a choice behavior, which is the choice of whether or not to perform, choice of the effort level to be exerted, and choice of whether or not to perform continuously. Although Campbell's Performance Model has been useful in many performance studies, it lacks comprehensiveness in explaining the antecedents of performance because it focuses mainly on the factors related to a person as a sole determinant of performance (Robbins, 2003).

Drawing on the limitation, Cardy and Dobbins and Waldman in Williams (2002) added the 'person factors' and 'systems factors' as predictors of performance. According to Cardy and Dobbins (as cited in Williams, 2002), 'person factors' are the abilities and personalities of an individual that may influence his or her performance level. This is evident in a study by Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994), which reported that personality influences employees' contextual behavior while experiences and abilities relate significantly to employees' task performance. Person factors can be enhancing if employees have relevant KSAOs and motivation. Nevertheless, person factors are considered inhibiting if employees have inadequate KSAOs and lack of motivation (Adler & Borys, 1996). 'System factors', on the other hand, are environmental factors related to organization, for instance organizational culture and structure, leadership, and job design (Williams, 2002). According Adler and Borys (1996), 'system factors' can be categorized into 'enabling' and 'coercing'. As an example, 'system factors' can be considered 'enabling' if positive organizational culture encourages high performance work place; nevertheless, 'system factors' can be considered 'coercing' if rigid organizational structure limits high performance work place (Adler & Borys, 1996). In sum, Theory of Performance by Cardy and Dobbins in Williams (2002), which includes 'person factors' and 'system factors', provides a more comprehensive outlook on the antecedents of performance.

Further, the Job Characteristics Theory of Motivation by Hackman and Oldham (as cited in Gomez-Mejia, Balkin, & Cardy, 2007) explains that positive job characteristics will bring about three critical psychological states, namely, experienced meaningfulness, experienced responsibilities, and knowledge of results. These situations will eventually lead to positive workplace outcomes, such as higher work motivation, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction (Morgeson & Campion, 2003; Gomez-Mejia *et al.* 2007). Similar to organizational characteristics, job characteristics

are categorized as the 'system factors' in the Performance model by Cardy and Dobbins and Waldman in Williams (2002).

Theory of Bureaucracy by Weber (1946) postulated that formal organizations, which are bureaucratically organized, have higher level of performance. This is due to the tasks specification and clear division of organizational structure which results in higher performance among employees. Further, clear and specified tasks improve employees' task performance from time to time in the sense of better quality and quantity of work output.

2.2 Organizational citizenship behavior as a contextual performance

The biggest challenge for employers in managing human resources is to get their employees working beyond what is stated in their job descriptions voluntarily. In fact, maximizing efforts from employees is important in sustaining competitive advantage, keeping abreast with changes, and promoting innovation (Organ, 1997). This situation demands for organizational citizenship behavior or OCB to be exhibited by all employees in the organization. Organ (1997) and Podsakoff *et al.* (2000) introduced organizational citizenship behavior, which is also known as the contextual performance or extra-role performance, as a prominent contributing factor to organizational effectiveness. Organizational citizenship behavior or OCB was first introduced in the early 1980s by Bateman and Organ (Organ *et al.* 2006). It has been defined by Organ (1988) as:

An individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system and that in aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization. By discretionary, we mean that the behavior is not an enforceable requirement of the role or job description that is the clearly specifiable terms of the person's employment contract with the organization; the behavior is rather a matter of personal choice, such that the omission is not generally understood as punishable (p. 4).

In other words, OCB concerns with the positive behavioral aspects that are neither stated in job description nor enforced by employment contract. Besides contextual performance, OCB has been also coined as the extra-role behaviors or discretionary behaviors (Organ *et al.* 2006). When first introduced by Bateman & Organ, OCB was distinguished into general compliance that concerns with what employees should do and altruism that focuses on employees' willingness in helping others (Organ *et al.* 2006). Later, Organ (1985) expanded OCB into five distinct dimensions namely, altruism, civic virtue, conscientiousness, courtesy, and sportsmanship. Following this, the concept of OCB has gone through several transformations. For instance, Williams and Anderson (1991) divided OCB into OCB-I that focuses on behaviors at individual level and OCB-O that deals with employee behaviors at organizational level. Then, Organ (1997) categorized OCB into three dimensions, which are helping, courtesy, and conscientiousness. According to Koster and Sanders (2006), OCB has also been defined as customer-service behavior or pro social behavior. However, Chiaburu and Baker (2006) stated that OCB and pro-social behavior or customer-service behavior differ markedly based on the context of the behaviors being performed by the employees. This is because OCB is about reciprocity whereby employees would engage in OCB if they perceive that their supervisors or colleagues exhibit OCB whereas pro-social behavior is the type of behaviors that should be exhibited by employees who are attending to the customers' needs (Chiaburu & Baker, 2006).

Despite numerous conceptualizations of OCB, the most scrutinized concept of OCB is based on the five dimensions by Organ (1985) namely, altruism, civic virtue, conscientiousness, courtesy, and sportsmanship. A more recent concept of OCB includes innovation as one of its dimension. Moon, Van Dyne, and Wrobel (2005) noted that this dimension is somewhat different from the classic definition of innovation and creativity because innovative behaviors in OCB relate to frequency of ideas or engagement level, not the quality or uniqueness of ideas. It has been suggested by Moon *et al.* (2005) that innovation is a crucial important to be included and examined in the OCB construct given the need for organizations nowadays to have employees that can participate actively in delivering ideas for organizational improvement.

2.3 Outcomes of organizational structure

According to Hage and Aiken (1967), two important features of organizational structure are formalization and centralization. Hage and Aiken (1967) also defined organizational formalization as the level to which an organization precisely spells out rules and procedures related to jobs in different situations. This aspect is also known as job codification. Rule observation refers to the extent to which an organization rigidly adheres to the rules and procedures. In other words, this construct measures how far employees are supervised in ensuring that they are not committing any offense against the company's rules and regulations (Hage & Aiken, 1967). Centralization deals with the amount of power distributed among employees of various positions. This variable is measured in terms of hierarchy of authority and participation in decision making. According to Hage and Aiken (1967), the former examines whether or not employees are reliant upon their supervisors in decision making while the latter identifies the level of employees' involvement in decisions on resource allocation and policy formation.

Adler and Borys (1996), on the other hand, conceptualized formalization into coercive and enabling. This is because Adler and Borys (1996) asserted that attitudinal and behavioral outcomes among employees are attributed to the type of formalization enforced in the organization (Adler & Borys, 1996). Hence, a conceptual understanding of this construct among top management is deemed crucial. Adler and Borys (1996) also explained that different attitudinal and behavior outcome of formalization originates from the selection process. An accurate selection process, which takes into account job congruence or 'person-job' fit element, may mitigate negative attitudinal or behavioral outcomes. For instance, highly formalized organizations should hire individuals who prefer routine tasks and have low growth needs. Adler and Borys (1996) also introduced four features that embody enabling and coercive dimensions, namely repair, internal transparency, global transparency, and flexibility. In an enabling situation, repair means allowing employees to adjust or make necessary changes to the workflow to enhance production process while in a coercing circumstance, employees have to follow the standardized work procedure and any deviation from it cannot be tolerated. Internal transparency, in the enabling formalization, concerns with employees' knowledge and skill on certain equipment, whereby any malfunctioning can be overcome immediately. In the coercive formalization, employees are to perform work instructions assigned, without being given any rationale because it is within their supervisors' boundary. Global transparency refers to the employees' savvy on the broader systems within their working field. Employees are not supposed to work beyond their specified realms. In contrast, employees in the enabling formalization situation are given full specified and contextual information to enable them comprehend the work systems (Adlers & Borys, 1996). This is also to promote creativity, interaction, and innovativeness among employees. In addition, Adler and Borys (1996) noted that due to lack of task autonomy and identify, highly formalized organizations depend on extrinsic motivation, such as rewards, to encourage positive attitudinal or behavioral outcomes. Enabling type of formalization, which gives employees autonomy and identification in their tasks, can cultivate intrinsic motivation. Further, goal congruence can help make formalization acceptable to employees because they understand the rationale of the work procedures given. All in all, Adler and Borys (1996) viewed formalization can be effective depending on the selection process, congruency of organizational goals, and type of industry in which an organization operates. In other words, personality traits of an individual determine the employee's success level regardless the type of organizational structure practiced. In addition to the burgeoning definitions of organizational formalization, Bodewes (2002) provided three definitions of organizational formalization but he proposes that formalization is most accurately defined as "the extent to which documented standards are used to control social actors' behavior and outputs". These functions are gauged based on two main features of formalization that are similar to Agarwal's (1993) conceptualization, namely rule observation and job codification. Bodewes (2002) highlighted that most researchers overlook the comprehensive definition of formalization by not including the aspect of rule observation or segregating it into two dimensions. In fact, formalization should be measured and defined collectively because it deals with the interaction of both job codification and rule observation (Bodewes, 2002).

The negative influence of formalization and centralization has been reported in most empirical investigations. A study conducted by Nasurdin *et al.* (2006) examined the influence of organizational structure (formalization and centralization) on job stress among salespersons in the stock broking industry of Malaysia. It was found that formalization has a positive influence on job stress because job that is bounded by inflexible rules and procedures will allow lesser autonomy and freedom for the incumbents on how to perform their tasks. This will most likely lead to job stress, which will be experienced by employees in such circumstance. Therefore, it is evident that highly rigid organization, which adopted formalization and centralization, will result in higher stress level among employees given the limited autonomy and freedom in performing job. In the same way, Tata and Prasad (2004) studied the moderating impact of organizational characteristics (formalization and centralization) on the self-management and team effectiveness relationship. Tata and Prasad (2004) categorized centralization into macro-level centralization and micro-level centralization whereby the former deals with employees' participation in decision making regarding policies and procedures at the organizational level and the latter concerns with employees' involvement in decision making regarding their own tasks. The first level supervisors and middle managers from the manufacturing companies responded in this study. Findings show that teams with higher self-management appeared to be more effective in organizations that allow input from employees with regard to their task performance (micro-level decision making). On the contrary, macro-level decision making does not influence the strength of self-management and team effectiveness association at any level. Findings by Tata and Prasad (2004) also suggested that there is a stronger relationship between self-management and team effectiveness in organizations that have lower level of formalization. In other words, fewer rules, policies, and procedures allow flexibility in teams' self-management, which eventually boost teams' effectiveness. In addition to organizational centralization and formalization, Tata and Prasad (2004) highlighted that there are three factors that may contribute to teams' effectiveness- team leader experience, clear goals, and adequate resources. Drawing on the findings, it can be concluded that flexibility encourages better team performance, especially at the micro-level decision making. To enhance team and individual effectiveness, employees should be given adequate freedom and autonomy in the decision making process, especially decisions that are related to their tasks.

In a study by Michaels, Dubinsky, Kotabe, and Chae (1996) among sales personnel in the electronics products industry from USA, Japan, and Korea, it was found that formalization inversely affects role ambiguity among sales personnel. This is because specified rules, policies, and procedures clarify role expectations, which inadvertently reduces role ambiguity. Finding by Michaels *et al.* (1996) also indicates formalization has a significant and negative influence on role conflict among respondents from the US. This finding is not applicable to the respondents in Japan and Korea. A plausible explanation for this result is because of the different work environment in the countries examined. In essence, Japanese and Korean workers are more collectivistic compared to their American counterparts, who are more individualistic. Formalization is deemed necessary by American employees to provide them guidelines in managing job stress and conflict. It was also reported in this study that formalization increases organizational commitment of Korean and Japanese sales personnel but role conflict has a negative impact on their work alienation. On top of that, Michaels *et al.* (1996) provided that role conflict does not have influence on US salespersons because Americans enjoy working independently, and therefore, conflict does not have any impact on their commitment level. This study reveals that employees of different culture may view organizational structure differently. Therefore, culture difference should be taken into account by the top management in deciding the level of organizational formalization and centralization to be adopted.

Kim and Lee (2006) expanded the context of a comparative study between public and private sector in the Asian context, specifically South Korea. Besides organizational culture and information technology, organizational structure was examined as the predictors of employee knowledge sharing capabilities. Dimensions of organizational structure investigated are centralization, formalization, and performance-based reward systems. It was hypothesized that while centralization and formalization influence employee knowledge sharing capabilities negatively, performance-based reward systems affect the criterion variable positively. Even though public service organizations reported higher mean scores for formalization and centralization and lower mean scores for clear vision and goals and performance based reward systems, these predictors are not related to employee knowledge sharing capabilities. Nonetheless, the level of knowledge sharing capabilities is higher among the private sector employees compared to the public sector counterparts. Kim and Lee (2006) contended that employee knowledge sharing capabilities differ between the two organizations because public sector managers face various organizational constraints in enhancing employee knowledge sharing capabilities. Organizational constraints were inadvertently attributed to the higher level of formalization and centralization reported in the public sector organizations. In sum, Kim and Lee (2006) asserted that public sector managers can adopt the same strategies practiced by their private sector counterparts in improving the employee knowledge sharing capabilities. Based on the findings, the researchers also suggested that leaders in the public sector should be more concerned about the deleterious impact of formalization and centralization on employee knowledge sharing capabilities. Empowerment, employee involvement, participative decision making are the means in promoting flexibility in organizational structure of the public sector.

2.4 Job Characteristics

Most studies on job characteristics adopt the job characteristics model developed by Hackman and Oldham (Morgeson & Campion, 2003). This model incorporates five dimensions of job characteristics, namely task identity, skill variety, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. The first three dimensions determine whether or not a certain job are meaningful to the job incumbent while autonomy and feedback are useful to tap the level of autonomy and feedback that the job incumbent has acquired from his or her job. According to Morgeson and Campion (2003), the earliest version of job characteristics dimensions was developed by Turner and Lawrence, which include the aspects of dealing with others and friendship opportunities. However, these two dimensions were later omitted because it is not centrally related to the job characteristics construct. Therefore, this study adopts the job characteristics dimensions developed by Hackman and Oldham due to its comprehensiveness in providing appropriate meaning to this particular construct.

Job characteristics have been related to various organizational constructs. Bhuian and Menguc (2002) explored the new configuration of job characteristics, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. This was done by examining the interactive effect of job characteristics and organizational commitment among expatriate salespersons. This investigation offers interesting findings because respondents reported higher level of satisfaction if they perceive their job provides higher level of autonomy, identity, and feedback. Conversely, task variety does not have a positive impact on the respondents' satisfaction level. With a higher level of satisfaction, respondents were also reported to have a higher level of organizational commitment. A study conducted earlier by Bhuian, Al-Shammari, and Jefri (1996) echoed the similar findings that job autonomy, task identity, and feedback have impacted job satisfaction, while task variety has influenced employees' commitment. Earlier, Anderson (1984) examined the same variables and reported similar findings that job autonomy, task identity, and feedback affect employees' job satisfaction. This study also indicates that autonomy and feedback are related to task performance, but not other dimensions of job characteristics. It is also important to note that this study indicates no relationship exists between job characteristics and absenteeism. Given the findings, it is crucial to give emphasis on the job design aspects, particularly autonomy and feedback, in promoting positive job attitudes, such as commitment and satisfaction, among employees.

On the contrary, a longitudinal study by Rensch and Steel (1998) reveals a significant correlation on the job characteristics and absenteeism relationship. It was found that job characteristics are the predictor of time-lost and absence frequency among the civilian employees in a large military organization. In fact, competence and need for achievement do not moderate the relationship between job characteristics and absenteeism. According to Lau and Pavett (1980), job characteristics, especially for the management positions, are very much alike. Hence, the contradictory findings reported by Rensch and Steel (1998) are perhaps attributed to the different nature of the organization in which the study has been carried out. Unlike the study by Anderson (1984), Rensch and Steel (1998) conducted the study in a large military organization. Therefore, civilians in such organization have a higher tendency to be absent from job if their job do not provide positive job design, such as high level of autonomy, variety of tasks, and adequate feedback.

Further, an empirical investigation by Chang and Lee (2006) in the manufacturing, banking, and service industries revealed that personality traits and job characteristics have a positive and significant influence on organizational commitment as well as job satisfaction. On the contrary, Thomas, Buboltz, and Winkelspecht (2004) discovered that personality has neither influenced job satisfaction nor moderated the job characteristics and job satisfaction relationship. Given the findings, Thomas *et al.* (2004) suggested that personality traits bear little importance in redesigning job and enhancing job satisfaction among employees in all of industries examined. In contrast, Schneider (2003) concurred that job characteristics have impacted managers' commitment and satisfaction. Similarly, Sanker and Wee (1997) conducted a study on job characteristics-job satisfaction association in three different countries and they reported that job characteristics influenced job satisfaction of the respondents in all of the countries.

Based on the above reviews of literature, it can be concluded that many empirical studies were done to examine the outcome of job characteristics to various organizational constructs, especially job satisfaction and organizational commitment. However, limited attention has been given on the outcomes of job characteristics in terms of task performance and OCB.

2.5 Organizational structure

The outcomes of organizational structure, namely formalization and centralization, have been examined in most studies. It is evident that this variable has negative influence on overall organizational effectiveness, which includes higher level of job stress (Nasurdin *et al.* 2006) and team effectiveness (Tata & Prasad, 2004). Therefore, this study hypothesizes that formalized rules and procedures and centralized decision making deter employees from performing their tasks effectively. Consequently, better task performance is hardly achievable in organizations with highly formalized rules and centralized decision making (Organ *et al.* 2006). Formalized rules and procedures and centralized decision making also hinder employees from 'thinking outside the box' in performing tasks. Hence, employees do not put extra effort or take any initiative to improve the way their jobs are performed. In other words, highly formalized and centralized organization discourages employees from exerting more efforts in achieving organizational goals (Organ *et al.* 2006). As such, it is hypothesized that:

Proposition 1: Formalization will negatively influence job performance.

Proposition 2: Centralization will negatively influence job performance.

Job characteristics have a positive influence on various organizational outcomes, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and absenteeism. This is evident based on the empirical studies, for instance Anderson (1984), Bhuian *et al.* (1996), Bhuian and Menguc (2002), Chang and Lee (2006), Rensch and Steel (1998), and Thomas *et al.* (2004). Furthermore, Singh (1998) revealed that job characteristics have a significant influence on job performance, but not on job satisfaction and commitment. Job Characteristics Theory of Motivation by Hackman and Oldham specifically explain that job characteristics, such as task identity, skill variety, task significance, autonomy, and feedback, are the 'system factors' affecting the psychological condition of employee in performing job. This state then determines the level of task performance and OCB exhibited by employees. Drawing on this proposition, it is postulated:

Proposition 3: Task identity will positively influence job performance.

Proposition 4: Skill variety will positively influence job performance.

Proposition 5: Task significance will positively influence job performance.

Proposition 6: Autonomy will positively influence job performance.

Proposition 7: Feedback will positively influence job performance.

3. Conceptual framework

According to the Performance model by Campbell, there are two major determinants of performance, namely motivation and ability. These factors are also known also the 'person factors' in which performance are determined solely by the criteria of an individual (as cited in Williams, 2002). Later, Cardy and Dobbins and Waldman improved the theory by adding in the 'system factors' as the antecedents of individual performance (as cited in Williams, 2002).

In specific, 'system factors' deals with factors within organizational environment and job design. Both factors may affect individual performance at different levels (Williams, 2002). This study examines the organizational characteristics as the 'system factors' that may influence task performance and OCB. Weber's Theory of Bureaucracy provides distinct features of formal organizations wherein tasks are distributed among various positions to enhance specialization and expertness among staff. This encourages effective hiring process, which is done by matching job requirements to candidates' qualifications. Another aspect discussed in this theory is that hierarchy of authority, which takes on the pyramid shape whereby each official is responsible for his or her subordinates' actions and each official has clear-cut authority over officials under his or her supervision. In other words, authority is clearly-circumscribed in such structure. Therefore, based on the literatures reviewed, the theoretical framework shown in Figure 1 is proposed.

4. Concluding Remarks

That employee job performance improves organizational competitive advantage to promote responsiveness in enhancing overall organizational performance has stimulated interest in identifying the antecedents to promote high performance employees. However, to perform on par or beyond of what is prescribed in job descriptions requires effective organizational structure and job characteristics. These are essentials in supporting such behaviors that may enhance employee task and contextual performance.

This paper proposes that job characteristics have substantial influence on task performance and OCB. This is due to the fact that most of the previous empirical studies examine the outcome of job characteristics on various organizational constructs, especially job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Further, organizational structure has been reported to affect various organizational outcomes, at different levels. It is suggested that to improve employee job performance, organizations ought to identify whether or not the existing organizational structure is supportive for them and to refine job characteristics so as to encourage employees to perform at their best.

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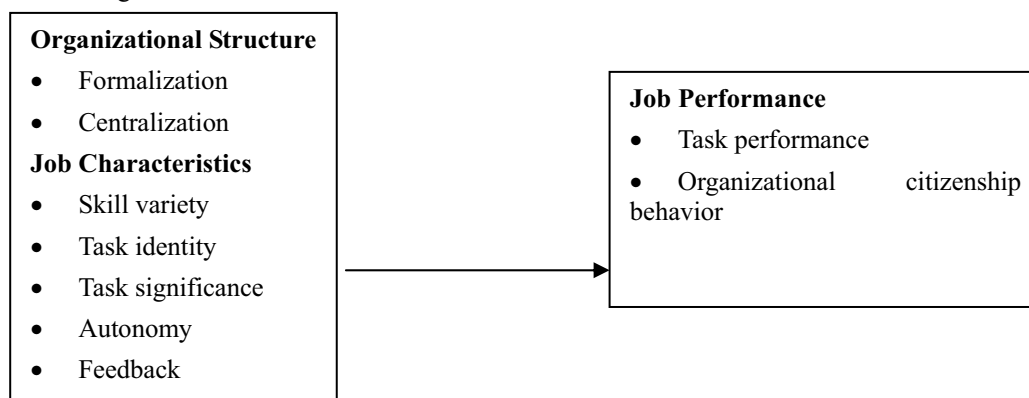


Figure 1. Conceptual framework for predicting the relationship between organizational characteristics and job characteristics and individual performance