The effects of organizational citizenship behavior in the academic environment

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Abstract

Organizational citizenship behavior - without being directly or explicitly rewarded by the formal compensation system, the informal behaviour contributes to organizational efficiency and acquires within the context of the Romanian academic environment certain specific features. It is known that OCB determines the organizational success to a large extent. The present study aims at analyzing the level of OCB in an academic organization from Romanian on one one hand and secondly, at identifying the relations established among professional competence, personality factors, job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior at the teaching staff within the Romanian academic environment.

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1. Introduction

It is a reality the fact that Romanian academic environment has a particular distinctiveness as compared to the European one taking into account the continuous changes and dissonances which have characterized it for over 20 years. These characteristics which refer mainly to the perpetual changes at the level of staff and educational policies and which culminate in a continuous low financing of the system is reflected in a direct and brutal manner on the

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efficiency of the educational system as well as on professional performances and satisfactions of those who, with responsibility and vocation, determine it to be functional for all that.

The empirical data confirm the fact that the efficiency of the system, its flexibility and adaptability are determined not only by the economic side but also by the psychological one, by those psycho-behaviours from the functional register of the member of the organization, namely consciousness, generosity, voluntarism etc. (Negură, 2008).

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Definitions of Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

The manifestation within an organization of these types of behaviours is known in the specialty literature under the name of organizational citizenship behavior or “the good soldier syndrome” (Organ, 1988). This is manifested under various forms such as loyalty, organizational compliance, volunteering and helping others (Podsakoff et al., 2000).

Organizational citizenship behavior is the individual voluntary behavior which discretionary not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system of the organization. (Organ et al, 2005). This type of behavior is rather a matter of personal choice (ibidem). As it is not specified by the duties prescribed in the job description, this type of behavior is not required by the organization and as a result, it cannot be awarded, but it often brings informal recognition to the employee – peers’ appreciation, manager’s or organizational partners’ (in our case students, pupils or parents), and for the organization functional efficiency and success.

2.2. Components of Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

The employees who manifest such types of behaviours demonstrate organizational citizenship behaviour (Organ, 1988): altruism: behavior which imply the discretionary help given to the peers/partners in matters related to job tasks; consciousness: which refers to behaviour that goes beyond the minimum required level or expectation; fairplay : the tendency to tolerate the inevitable inconveniences and restrictions related to work without complaining (Organ, 1990), courtesy: refers to behavior that helps to prevent problems in advance, rather than helping someone who already has a problem; civic virtue: which refers to behavior involving participation in overall organizational issues. This is expressed by the wish to participate actively in the leadership of the organization, to the monitorizing of the social and economic environment with a view to identify the threats and opportunities, even with high individual costs.

Although the specialty literature includes much more taxonomies of OCB (Smith, Organ & Near, 1983; Van Dyne, 1994; Marrison, 1994; Coleman & Borman, 2000; Podsakoff, 2000), we consider that taxonomy presented by Organ (1990) reflects best OCB in the Romanian academic environment.

2.3. Determinants of Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

Podsakoff et. al (2000, p. 527) analyze in a comprehensive study antecedents of OCB from the existing empirical research and divide them in four large categories: a. individual characteristics: employee attitudes (satisfaction, fairness, organizational commitment, trust in leader), dispositional variables (conscientiousness, agreeableness, positive and negative affectivity), employee role perception (role ambiguity, role conflict) and demographic variables (tenure, gender), employee abilities and individual differences (ability / experience/training knowledge, professional orientation, need for independence, indifference to rewards); b. task characteristics: task feedback, task routinization and intrinsically satisfying task; c. organizational characteristics: organizational formalization, organizational inflexibility, advisory / staff support, cohesive group, rewards outside the leader’s control, spatial distance from leader, perceived organizational support; d. leadership behaviors: “core” transformational leadership, articulating a vision, providing an appropriate model, fostering the acceptance of group goals, high performance expectations, intellectual stimulation, contingent reward behavior, contingent punishment behavior, leader role clarification, leader specification of procedures, supportive leader behaviors and leader-member exchange.
In character with the synthesis elaborated by Podsakoff et al. (2000), we wish to analyze some variables from the level of personal characteristics and namely job satisfaction, organizational commitment and locus of control.

1. Job satisfaction and OCB: job satisfaction represents the employees’ answer modality on their work itself and work environment and is caused when one’s need is satisfied at the workplace. The specialty studies demonstrate the relation between job satisfaction and OCB (Bateman & Organ, 1983, Moorman et al, 1993, Williams & Anderson, 1991). Smith, Organ & Near (1983) demonstrated that job satisfaction represents a predictor of altruism. Father & Rauter (2004) affirmed that employees attitude who work voluntarily and intend to remain in the organization determines their job satisfaction. Moreover, the employees who go beyond their job duties, making efforts in achieving the organizational objectives are satisfied in their work and take pride in their affiliation.

2. Organizational commitment and OCB: organizational commitment as the psychological attachment felt by the person for the organization that reflects the degree to which the individual internalizes or adopts characteristics or perspectives of the organizations (O’Reilly III & Chatman, 1986). The studies show a strong association between OCB and the identification, respectively internalization – as components of organizational commitment. Empirical research made by Organ and Ryan (1995) demonstrate significant relations between OCB and organizational commitment behavior. Donaldson & al., 2002 found a significant positive relationship between organizational commitment and occurrence of OCB.

3. Locus of control and OCB: locus of control (Rotter, 1966) refers to the attributions individuals make regarding outcomes of personal consequence. Individuals with internal locus of control believe their behavior influences outcomes pertinent to them, while individuals with external locus of control feel that such outcomes are unpredictable or a function of chance. We can appreciate that individuals with external locus of control engage supportive behaviours, especially when they intend to influence a peer or a partner positively or to increase his appreciation or to be rewarded. (Hoff-Hofstetter & Mannheim, 1999). Individuals who think they have the power to influence the environment and the outcomes are inclined to engage in organizational citizenship behaviours. Moreover, employees with a high level of control of their work outcomes are inclined to engage organizational citizenship behaviors, contrary to those with a low level of the control which show less inclination to OCB (Schaubroeck & Fink, 1998).

3. Objectives

From the perspective of the determinants of organizational citizenship behavior, the question which associates with the research is the following: “What are the factors which determine teachers develop behaviours targeted to discretionary, altruistic, cooperative actions, other than those imposed by the employment contract?; Which are the main factors which determine OCB: internal resources of personality (locus of control) or the attitudes (job satisfaction, organizational commitment)?”.

The present pilot study proposes to investigate which of the components of the organizational citizenship behavior are manifested by teachers and to intercept the relation established among individual characteristics (locus of control), attitudes (commitment behaviour and job satisfaction) and the manifestation of organizational citizenship behavior at teachers from Romanian academic environment.
4. Methodology of research

4.1. Participants.

The investigation had been performed on a sample of 60 teachers from the Romanian academic environment. The structure of the research group is the following: 29% males and 71% females, having a relevant didactic experience—over 10 years, all of them from an urban background.

4.2. Instruments

1. Organizational citizenship behavior scale (adapted by Tătaru, 2003 after Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman & Fetter). The scale includes the five dimensions of the construct (altruism, general compliance, fair play, courtesy, civic virtue), being made up of 28 items. The evaluation of the measured behavior had been achieved by means of a Lickert scale in 5 levels, from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5).

2. Organisation Commitment Scale – OCS- (adapted after Mayer & Allen), is a scale which evaluates the type of commitment in an organization (affective, continuance or normative).

3. Job Satisfaction Survey- JSS- (adapted after Spector, 1988) evaluates the employees’ attitudes as regards their work and its aspects: pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating procedures, coworkers, nature of work, communication. The scale has 36 items which refer to the mentioned dimensions, being measured on a Lickert scale in 6 levels.

4. Work Locus of Control Scale – WLCS 8 shortform- (adapted after Spector, 1988) represents an instrument to assess control beliefs in the workplace, being made up of 16 items. The format is summated rating with six response choices: “disagree very much” (1), “agree very much” (6). Total score is the sum of all items, and ranges from 16 to 96. The scale is scored so that externals receive high scores.

5. Results and discussions

The analysis of the data offers the following results on the OCB scales: the average of the global score at OCB \( m=100.79, \ sd=21.27 \), for the dimension altruism \( m=22.52, \ sd=5.73 \), courtesy \( m=17.05, \ sd=5.68 \), consciousness \( m=28.02, \ sd=6.05 \), fairplay \( m=15.58, \ sd=5.69 \) and civic virtue is \( m=17.63, \ sd=2.69 \). We observe that the scores registered by teachers at the OCB scale range on the superior part of the curve, demonstrating an average level of implication in the activity of the academic organization, beyond the requirements specified in the job description. We registered lower scores at the dimension consciousness, which demonstrates that they accept and internalize the rules and norms imposed by the organization fairly easily. We found the lowest scores at the variable fairplay, dimension which refers to the tendency to complain permanently, invoking several reasons to manifest discontent, but without making any effort to diminish them. It is very interesting that, although discontent, they involve in organization issues, manifesting civic virtues at an average superior level.

As concerns the relation set between job satisfaction and OCB this is significant even if the value is not high \( r=0.42, \ p=0.000 \). It was also challenging to analyze the relation set between job satisfaction and components of OCB. We did not find a significant relation between civic virtue and job satisfaction. It seems that the involvement in the administrative issues of the organization does not produce job satisfaction within teachers. This is also confirmed by the specific features of Romanian educational management.

Concerning the relation between organizational commitment and OCB, we noticed significant relations at the level of both affective commitment \( r=0.52, \ p=0.000 \), and continuance commitment \( r=0.43, \ p=0.000 \). It seems that the relation equally demonstrated by the specialty studies (Organ and Ryan, 1995; Donaldson & al., 2002) proves to be valid within the Romanian academic background.

The relation between OCB and locus of control is significant, negative and moderate, \( r=-0.37, \ p=0.000 \). The results are surprising. According to expectation, externals had to manifest OCB. It seems that the positive or negative reinforcement needed by the internals determine such behaviours. Internals perceive reinforcement as being more important, because they believe they control rewards, as compared to externals who are less prone to change behavior because they think it will not influence reinforcement. For a more accurate research, we should identify the
mediation and moderation relations set between organizational commitment (affective and continuance) and the dimensions of OCB manifested on one hand towards the organization, and on the other hand towards the organization members and their internal personality dispositions. The sample of research being very small did not allow such type of analysis but invites to new directions for research.

6. Conclusions

The present pilot study highlights the determinants at individual level in the practice of OCB. The data cannot be generalized but the study opens new research directions in determining the structuring modalities of individual, organizational and leadership factors in the manifestation of OCB by teachers. The practical implications of the study target the modalities of intervention at the managerial level, through planning several motivational strategies for teachers, in order to manifest OCB. This could be done through creating a supportive environment in school which would create job satisfaction, organizational commitment and implicitly, behaviours in the area of organizational civism: volunteering actions, altruism, involvement, responsibility and fairplay. The intervention can be achieved rather at a micro level (the level of the organization proper) by the decisional actors, as at the macro level (educational system) changes are difficult and need time, implying changes of educational policies.

References