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High – school, Organizational Citizenship Behavior Moderator
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Abstract

High school is a decisive factor in every society evolution. Its mission is to offer professional competencies and educational framework, indispensable for teen careers, but in the same time it must educate teenagers on the 21st Century essential principles and values. Labour market demands for new candidates challenge us to carefully analyze educational and learning processes and to formulate solutions that may contribute to their improvement.

Our article aims to analyse in depth the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) concept, to measure its components by interpreting the scores resulted from a survey carried out among high-school students. On the basis of the results obtained and after analyzing the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) level and the relationships between individual and group Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), at the end of our study we will suggest some actions that should be taken in order to improve the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) at the level of the educational unit studied.

The survey took place in 2013 and was based on a questionnaire delivered on paper, adapted after Organ and Podsakoff (1988). 200 questionnaires were given to high – school students and 196 answers were received and processed. Good answering rate (98%) illustrated high – school students’ interest for such kind of researches and for the proposed theme. Data were processed with SPSS statistical program (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) approach in school is a novelty. The results obtained give a perspective about teenagers’ opinions and is an effective tool for those involved in the educational processes from Romanian schools.

Keywords: Organizational Citizenship Behavior; student; school; education; teenagers

1. Introduction

Our research goal is to determine high - school students OCB level and to demonstrate the existence or the non-existence of direct links between individual and group OCB. We also want to come up with solutions to increase OCB awareness among high - school students.

Our research focuses on 4 hypotheses, as follows:

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H1: High-school students OCB is low.
H2: There are differences between individual and group OCB level.
H3: Individual OCB develops in the same direction as the group OCB.
H4: There is a strong interdependence between individual and group OCB level.

We consider that, as far as the Romanian educational institutions are concerned, it is necessary to analyse and, if the case, improve the OCB. We consider that scholars’ performance depends directly on the OCB.

Literature has developed many OCB components. We will try to define the five-factor model consisting of Altruism, Courtesy, Conscientiousness, Civic Virtue and Sportsmanship and we will highlight its specific school features. Thus, the meaning of the OCB components may be:

a) Altruism, which is generally defined as a disinterested action made in favour of another person. “Altruism in the workplace consists essentially of helping behaviours. These behaviours can both be directed within or outside of the organization.” Organ (1983). Altruism in school units consists of helping a mate to understand a new subject and to complete a paper on time etc., practically, all helping actions between mates, made to support the educational process.

b) Civic Virtue - according to Law et al. (2005) “Civic virtue is characterized by behaviours that indicate the employee’s deep concerns and active interest in the life of the organization”. Practically, Civic Virtue contains those actions that the members of an organization develop with the purpose to achieve the organization’s goals. At school level, Civic Virtue encompasses a series of social and educational activities – voluntary participation in different artistic, sports, education and communal activities – in schools. Students with a high Civic Virtue level are highly involved in these kinds of activities, being conscious of the importance of their activities for their school’s reputation.

c) Conscientiousness, which according to Law et al. (2005) “consists of behaviours that go well beyond the minimum role requirements of the organization.” The members of the organization accept to respect all the rules and regulations of the organization. At the school level, conscientiousness means coming day by day at school, doing homework, participating in class discussions and activities and so on.

d) Courtesy has been defined as “discretionary behaviours that aims at preventing work-related conflicts with others” (Law et al., 2005). At school level it is a behaviour oriented towards avoiding conflicts – the students inform their mates and teachers when they are not able to participate in class lessons or meetings, have a civilized behaviour during the lessons and outside them, cooperate without trying to impose themselves, or their ideas at all costs, are polite etc.

e) Sportsmanship is, according to Organ et al. (2006) the “ability to roll with the punches” or otherwise, the power to have a correct, respectable and positive attitude even when there are situations that produce discomfort, situations which are inevitable in an organization’s activity. Responding calmly and rationally to this kind of challenges may appease, from the beginning, possible stressful situations and solve more quickly the problems that occur. At school level, students should not react violently to mates cavil, should not behave inappropriately with the teachers when they get a low grade even if they did not deserve it, should avoid team mates quarrel even when a mate contributes unequally to a project, etc. Sportsmanship practically contributes to a significant reduction of inefficient time and energy consumption.

2. Literature review concerning Organizational Citizenship Behavior in educational institutions

Being at the junction of many sciences – Management, Psychology, Sociology, Ergonomics – OCB is a relatively recent approach of the relationships that exist between the members of an organization and of the influence that these relationships have on the performances of the organization.

Organ (1988) defines OCB as “individual behaviour 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’s definition includes all the behavioural elements of the members of the organization that are not required by the regulations of the organization and by the job description and that are entirely due to personal choice. OCB is a discretionary individual behaviour of the members of the organization, which is not directly or explicitly admitted by the formal reward system, but which promotes the proper functioning of the organization (Organ, 1988). Organ considers that there is a direct link between OCB and organizational effectiveness. Organ (1995) presents a five-factor model consisting of Altruism, Courtesy, Conscientiousness, Civic Virtue and Sportsmanship.
The interest in studying OCB has grown continuously in the last years. Therefore the study area has extended from Economics and its related fields to other areas, at this moment school representing a high interest area.

At global level, OCB in schools has aroused a major interest in the last years. The main study direction was the school climate, as it can be considered an important starting point for the creation of the necessary framework to achieve organization’s goals. Researches that highlight the positive effect of a positive climate on school results were made by Hoy, Tarter and Kottkamp (1991), the idea being developed lately by Hoy, Hannum and Tschanne-Moran (1998). The relationship between OCB and school climate was discussed in their study by DiPaola M., Tschanne-Moran M. (2001).

In another study, Vigoda-Gadot, Beeri, Birman - Shemesh and Somech (2007) also highlighted the positive climate concept that has salutary influences on high - school students.

The paper written by Tarter, Bliss and Hoy (1989) approaches the problem of OCB and trust in high - schools and universities. Hoffman, Sabo, Bliss and Hoy (1995) analysed school climate based on trust and Tarter, Sabo and Hoy (1995) approached the relationship between school climate based on trust in high-schools and universities. The authors highlighted that trust is important for the good functioning of schools and for the improvement of high-school students’ achievements. So, high – school students that have good results are those who have principals, teachers and parents that collaborate and trust each other for the benefit of the students.

Several studies have been done to illustrate the links between teachers OCB, school climate and education performances. Hoy, Tarter and Kottkamp (1991) highlighted the effects of teachers’ behaviour (from one school), centred on routine, and the way in which this behaviour affected the results registered at school level. Hoy and Sabo (1998) analyzed the relationship between the level of satisfaction of school leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behavior. Kernodle T., Noble D. (2012) made an analysis about the efficiency level of teachers’ activities inside a high school. Interesting studies on the same topic are those published by Christ O., van Dick R., Wagner U., Stellmacher J. (2003) that analyse OCB’s influence factors on school teachers. We should also mention here Burns T., Carpenter J. (2008) and Cooper J., D. (2010) who analyzed the link between OCB collective effectiveness and school effectiveness and Khalid S. A. (2010) who showed the importance of OCB’s positive evolution and students’ academic achievements.

As we know, at the Romanian educational level, OCB study has not been approached until now. Starting from this finding and taking into account the importance of the relationship between OCB and organizational performances, we will try to highlight some relevant aspects related to high - school students OCB, based on a survey done in a Bucharest High - school.

3. Methodology and research

In this research stage we want to evaluate high-school students OCB. The target group on which we made the research was represented by the high - school students of an Economic College from Bucharest. 200 high-school students took part in this study. 199 high - school students answered our questionnaire and 196 requests were validated. Statistically, 98% of answers were considered for the final results of our study. The sample was representative.

The method used was the research based on a questionnaire. Before starting the test, the participants were informed regarding the development of the test, the goals aimed and the fact that the test was not mandatory.

The questionnaire was submitted only once. The questionnaire was spread physically, 50 questionnaires for every grade (IXth - XIIth grade), in order to have an exact representation. We collected the answers in 3 weeks. Each set of questions corresponded to Organ’s five OCB dimensions (Organ, 1988). Our questionnaire had two parts, each consisting of 24 questions. The first part of the questionnaire evaluated the OCB at individual level (by self evaluation) and the second part evaluated classmates (at class level). For each OCB dimension, Altruism, Sportsmanship,Courtesy and Consciousness, there were sets of five questions for both parts of the questionnaire and for the Civic Virtue dimension, there were 4 questions for both variants.

Each participant in the survey had to answer the questions using a 5 point Likert scale, characteristic to questionnaires. Likert scaling is a bipolar scaling method. It measures either positive or negative responses to a statement. The format of the five-level Likert item, used in our study is as follows: strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, and strongly agree.

Firstly, we verified the 1st and the 2nd hypothesis (H1: High-school students OCB is low; H2: There are differences between individual and group OCB level) by reviewing the scores obtained by each component and
the average of OCB components/dimensions. We processed and verified the data with SPSS statistical program (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and we obtained the following results represented in Table 1.

Table 1. Medium values of Organizational Citizenship Behavior dimensions, at individual and group level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OCB components/dimensions</th>
<th>Students individual perception of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (self evaluation)</th>
<th>Students group perception of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Mates evaluation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Altruism</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>2.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sportsmanship</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>2.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courtesy</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Virtue</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total average</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>2.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our research scores presented in Table 1 show for all OCB components, both at individual and group level, values that are close to the average value of 2.5. These results contradict the 1st hypothesis, demonstrating the existence of an OCB level which exceeds the average in the case of high-school students. OCB components score analysis highlighted some major aspects, as it follows.

According to high-school students group perception, Civic Virtue had the lowest value. This shows a low level of work satisfaction and mate relationships. A new approach between high-school students on one side and high-school student – teacher relationship on the other side, mainly in communication will produce the premises of a significant individual and group increase of the Civic Virtue dimension. In the same time, a better interpersonal communication will have positive effects on class climate. Civic Virtue may also be increased by co-opting high – school students in the decisional process that deals with school problems which will make students fell more responsible towards the whole educational process in their school.

Altruism may be encouraged by proposing some group activities, by initiating some common projects and by encouraging high-school students’ interpersonal communication.

Sportsmanship recorded values demonstrate the existence of a medium potential to deal with critical situations, and a relatively low disposition for additional homework. At the end of an overloaded period should be given a series of stimulus both at individual and group level, changing thus high-school students’ perception over a bigger work volume.

Courtesy registered scores little surpass the average, high-school students proving though a behavior oriented towards avoiding conflicts. The development of this component could improve classroom and school climate.

Conscientiousness registered the best individual score, but at the group level the value decreased significantly, which denote a strong wish for self improvement. At individual level, we have noticed that students are no longer satisfied only to graduate. They struggle to continuously improve their knowledge. At the same time we can remark a high degree of individualism.

The results of this study highlighted a good level of Conscientiousness at individual level and the fact that high – school students are conscious of the great expectations that they will have to face in the future; they consider that they have good perspectives to be hired by nowadays Romanian organizations. Altruism and Courtesy levels (almost medium), permit us to appreciate that there are real perspectives to improve students motivation in the educational process.

All data that we previously presented validate the 2nd hypothesis (H2: There are differences between individual and group OCB levels).

Further we analyzed the verity of the following two hypotheses (H3: Individual OCB develops in the same direction with group OCB; H4: There is a strong interdependence between individual and group OCB level) which deal with the interconnection between individual and group OCB development. We processed and verified the data with SPSS statistical program (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and we obtained the following results represented in Table 2.
Table 2. Individual and group correlations concerning Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Individual OCB</th>
<th>Group OCB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spearman's rho</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual OCB Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.289**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>4704</td>
<td>4704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group OCB Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>.289 **</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>4704</td>
<td>4704</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to Table 2, the analysis done at individual and group level highlighted a weak relationship between OCBs at these two levels, but their evolution is simultaneous, in the same direction, which validate the 3rd hypothesis (H3: Individual OCB develops in the same direction with group OCB).

The 3rd hypothesis is also validated by the information that presents the association between the “self evaluation” variable and “mates evaluation” variable, which is positive (+0.289). Taking into account the threshold of significance p<0.001, it results a positive link between the two analyzed variables, which determine their simultaneous increase or decrease.

In the same time, the value of correlation coefficient (r) is enclosed in the [0.2; 0.4] interval, interval which is very close to 0. This fact shows a weak relationship between the two variables. In consequence, the influence of individual OCB at individual level over the group OCB level is weak, which does not validate the 4th hypothesis (H4: There is a strong interdependence between individual and group OCB level).

4. Conclusions and discussions

OCB has a huge importance for school activity, for two main reasons: the increase of educational performance and the importance that OCB has for the high – school students’ future careers (Di Paola, M., Tschannen – Moran, M. 2001, Burns, T., Carpenter, J. 2008, Cooper, J. D. 2010, Khalid S. A. 2010).

Not validating the 1st hypothesis is, in fact, a positive aspect. Our argument is that the existence of a medium OCB at high – school students is a start and thus, there are premises of a relatively rapid development of high – school students OCB.

Validating the 2nd and the 3rd hypothesis determined us to appreciate that the five dimensions of the OCB evolve simultaneously in the same direction, producing a synergic effect able to determine a significant increase of the OCB level both at individual and group level. A special attention should be given to Civic Virtue, dimension that had the lowest values both at individual and group level.

As we have already showed, because of salutary effects of a high OCB in school institutions, encouraging such a behaviour is more than desirable. In this context, we propose a series of actions, directions and measures, whose appliance may significantly contribute to increase OCB in schools. Among those we retain with priority the improvement of school climate by achieving an upgraded and innovative management that may lead to teachers more active involvement and implicitly may influence high - school students behaviour and motivation. OCB components that may be influenced here are Consciousness and Civic Virtue. Moreover, by encouraging free discussions with the high school students about their personal future (both individual and group discussions) we can influence the evolution of Civic Virtue. Furthermore, Consciousness is influenced by the high - school student’s increasing concern regarding the direct relationship between the knowledge accumulated and their perspectives of having in future a well paid job, which can allow them to fulfil their dreams and expectations. Altruism, Sportsmanship and Courtesy are influenced by high-school students’ involvement in external school group/team activities. Finally, Civic Virtue can be influenced by a successful dialogue between the high-school student and the teacher and by encouraging positive initiatives from the part of the students, initiatives that may also determine positive changes at individual and group level.

Studying the OCB in the Romanian educational field and the methodology applied in this study is a novelty. The relationship between OCB and school performance is, from our information, little approached at national level. Even if this study has a series of limits because of the non-inclusion of some important factors that determine school OCB level (teachers, parents and so on) and of a unique sample from one school, we consider that our study will draw attention to this domain (OCB), little studied at National level. In the same time our
study tried to find new methods to determine the efficiency of the National educational growth plan. Understanding and applying OCB in school units is an advantage for the educational activity, directly influencing school performance.

References


