

## Relationship Between Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Task Performance

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**Abstract:** In recent years, there has been an increase interest in Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) in organizations. Many scholars believe that OCB improves overall organizational efficiency. The main objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between OCB and task performance among 450 employees of Behzisty organization in central provinces of Iran. The study also looked at the influence of gender, age, education and tenure on the relationship between OCB and task performance. Instruments used to collect data were questionnaires on demographic information, organizational citizenship behaviour and task performance assessment for supervisors' ratings of performance. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. Pearson correlation coefficient was employed to analyze the relationship between OCB and task performance. Multiple regressions were used to examine the moderating effect of gender, age, education and tenure on the relationship of OCB and task performance. The results found that there was a significant relationship between OCB and task performance. It was also shown that gender and education moderated the relationship between OCB and task performance. The results have significant implications on the policies of human resource as well as organizations in Iran.

**Key words:** OCB, task performance, multiple regression, moderator effects, Pearson correlation, gender, Malaysia

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### INTRODUCTION

Much interest in the field of industrial and organizational psychology has been the focus on Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) (Borman *et al.*, 2001). Smith *et al.* (1983) emphasized that for organizations to operate successfully, their employees must be willing to do more than the minimal formal and specified technical aspects of their jobs. Many researchers believe that OCBs improve overall organizational efficiency (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2000) but the dimensions of the construct are believed to be diverse and conceptually related (Le Pine *et al.*, 2002).

Improvement of job performance, sometimes referred to as the criterion (Dalal, 2005) is also a concern for many researchers in the field (Spector, 2006). In relation to this, some researchers (Rotundo, 2002) have suggested that there are three broad performance domains; task performance, Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) and Counterproductive Work Behaviour (CWB).

OCB can be defined as activities that support the social and psychological environment in which the central tasks of organizations are accomplished (Borman and Motowidlo, 1993). Organizational researchers have

discovered that some employees contribute to the welfare or effectiveness of their organization by going beyond the duties prescribed in their jobs (Muchinsky, 2006). Spector (2006) defined OCB as a behaviour that goes beyond the formal requirements of the job and is beneficial to the organization. In other words, OCB is the extra efforts that demonstrate dedication to the job (Coleman and Borman, 2000). Furthermore, Le Pine *et al.* (2000) conceptualized OCB as a latent construct and employees' tendency to be cooperative and helpful in organizational settings.

In relation, task performance relates to specific job requirements and includes all activities that are directly related to the organization's technical core for example, closing a sale or contributing to sales unit revenue (Borman and Motowidlo, 1997; Motowidlo *et al.*, 1997). Task performance can be viewed as an activity in which an individual is able to accomplish successfully the task assigned to him or her, subject to the normal constraints of the reasonable utilization of available resources (Jamal, 2007).

**Literature review:** Previous research has shown the role of OCB in enhancing organizational effectiveness, particularly quantity and quality of work group

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performance and efficiency (Podsakoff *et al.*, 1997). For this reason, OCB may be instrumental to work groups and organizations whereby people try to reciprocate when others help them, do them a favour or treat them fairly. Therefore if OCBs give positive effects for both the manager and the organization, managers might repay employees who exhibit OCBs (perhaps out of a sense of fairness) by giving them higher performance evaluations (Organ *et al.*, 2006). Research has consistently shown a significant relationship between the two types of performance which are the contextual performance (OCB) and task-performance (Cropanzano *et al.*, 2003).

A quantitative review of the OCB literature was provided by Hoffman *et al.* (2007) who investigated the construct validity of the organizational citizenship behaviour, task performance distinction. Results showed that OCB consistently relates more strongly to attitudes than does task performance and shares a modest amount of variance with attitudinal correlates beyond task performance.

Other findings like Shih (2007) have shown that the higher the organizational citizenship behaviour, the better the task performance is. Nielson *et al.* (2001) conducted a longitudinal, correlation field study with 52 work teams from six organizations located in the Eastern United States. Results indicated that individual OCB did not correlate with individual performance but did correlate with team OCB, especially with concurrent team performance, subsequent team performance and customer-rated team performance.

Ladebo (2004) examined the dimensions of the citizenship behaviours of employees in the agricultural industry. Surveys were administered to 207 agriculture program post-graduate students at a University of Agriculture in South-Western Nigeria. Based on the regression analyses, conscientious behaviour was influenced by age, implying that with increasing age, the employee is more likely to internalize the rules and procedures governing task performance in the organization. Thus, the employee will tend to become more reliable in task performance and service delivery to clients (i.e., good citizens syndrome).

During the last 2 decades, the number of women in the civil service has rapidly increased and so women will soon compete with men for managerial positions in public bureaucracies. Consequently, gender could be considered as a determinant of OCB as women might expect to render more forms of OCB (Organ and Ryan, 1995). Hartman *et al.* (1988) investigated the impact of occupation and sex on sex role-stereotyping. Among the findings of the study were that high job performance was perceived to be more related to masculine than feminine gender and that men

were seen as more powerful than women. Similarly, good performance was also viewed as more related to men than women. Ng and Feldman (2008) found that age demonstrated significant and positive relationships with OCB. In addition, Feldman and Lankau (2005) found that age was positively related to productivity measures of job performance. Kanfer and Ackerman (2004) have emphasized that age is often accompanied by increases in experiential knowledge. Allen *et al.* (2002) found that older participants could multitask as effectively as younger participants.

The relationships between the individual facets of OCB with task performance in past studies have shown mixed results (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2000; Organ *et al.*, 2006). Therefore, this study was conducted to ascertain the relationship between organizational citizenship behaviour and its five dimensions (loyalty, obedience, social participation, advocacy participation and functional participation) and task performance. This study also sought to determine the moderating effect of gender, age, educational level and tenure on the relationship between organizational citizenship behaviour.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research is a correlational study. It was conducted among employees of Behzisty organization which is a welfare organization in Iran. This organisation offers social welfare services to the disabled and needy people who are not covered by insurance system or benefit protective services. The budget of this organization is mainly allocated by the government. Other financial public resources are special funds, public donations and charities.

**Participants:** A total of 530 employees of Behzisty organization were randomly selected for this study out of which 450 agreed to be participants of the study. There were 230 women and 220 men whose age ranged from 18-57 years old. Majority of the participants (91.1%) had at least a diploma level of education and 66.5% fall within 34-49 age group. More than 50% had >13 years of work experience.

**Instruments:** Three sets of questionnaires were used to collect data; Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) assessment, task performance (supervisors' ratings) and the demographic questionnaires. Both the OCB assessment and task performance were translated into Persian language using back translation technique by Brislin *et al.* (1973).

**Organization citizenship behaviour assessment:** The questionnaire assesses five dimensions of OCB which are loyalty, obedience, social participation, advocacy participation and functional participation (Van Dyne *et al.*, 1994). The 34 items are rated using a 7 point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. The Cronbach alpha of this instrument for this study are; loyalty = 0.70, obedience = 0.92, social participation = 0.71, advocacy participation = 0.91, functional participation = 0.76 and the total OCB = 0.91.

**Task performance:** The supervisors' ratings of performance questionnaire suggested by Kobe-steel company of Japan in 1993 as a tool for evaluation of task performance of staff by directors and supervisors was employed. This questionnaire was completed by supervisors rating the respondents. The questionnaire elicits answers from the supervisor to appraise the merit of personnel in the last year based on a merit item that contains one question. Each of these items was measured using a 5 point scale ranging from (1) very weak to (5) very good. The correlation between questionnaire of task performance (supervisors' ratings) and scale of merit is acceptable at level of significance of  $p < 0.001$  and the correlation between questionnaire of task performance (supervisors' ratings) and questionnaire of task performance (self-assessment) is acceptable at level of significance of  $p < 0.05$ . In this study, reliability's coefficient of questionnaire of task performance (supervisors' ratings) were computed by Cronbach's alpha (0.93) and split half (0.95).

**Demographic assessment:** The questions developed by the researcher were used to assess demographic variables which were gender, age, education levels and tenure.

**Procedures:** The researcher arranged a meeting to coordinate with Behzisty organization to carry out the research, followed by meetings with 450 employees who were subjects in this study. The meeting also involved all the supervisors who were supposed to rate the subjects' task performance. The task performance questionnaires were completed by the supervisors while OCB and demographic questionnaires were completed by the respondents.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Relationship between OCB and task performance:** Table 1 shows the results of Pearson correlation which found a positive significant relationship between OCB and task performance ( $r = 0.81$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The results also

Table 1: Correlations between OCB and its dimensions and task performance

Variables	Task performance
OCB	0.81*
Loyalty	0.72*
Obedience	0.85*
Social participation	0.84*
Advocacy participation	0.63*
Functional participation	0.57*

\* $p < 0.01$

Table 2: Multiple regression analysis results of standardised beta coefficients

Variables	Standardized coefficients	
	Beta ( $\beta$ )	t-test
Loyalty	0.08	1.27
Obedience	0.48	9.01*
Social participation	0.32	6.85*
Advocacy participation	-0.01	-0.27
Functional participation	0.03	0.78

\* $p < 0.0001$

indicated that there were significant relationships between all the five dimensions of OCB with task performance: loyalty and task performance ( $r = 0.72$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ); obedience and task performance ( $r = 0.85$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ); social participation and task-performance ( $r = 0.84$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ); advocacy participation and task performance ( $r = 0.63$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and functional participation and task performance ( $r = 0.57$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

The results in Table 2 showed that there was significant relationship between dimensions of OCB and task performance ( $R^2 = 0.81$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The results showed that 81% of the dependent variable (task performance) variance is due to the independent variable (OCB) and the prediction was computed in Table 2 showing that only obedience ( $\beta = 0.48$ ,  $t = 9.01$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and social participation ( $\beta = 0.32$ ,  $t = 6.85$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) predicted the task performance significantly while other dimensions of OCB such as loyalty, advocacy participation and functional participation did not predict the task performance.

### Moderated effects of gender, age, educational level and tenure on the relationship between OCB and task performance:

Result showed that there was significant relationship between OCB and task performance ( $R^2 = 0.76$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ). The results showed that 76% of the dependent variable (task performance) variance was due to the independent variable (OCB) and the prediction was ( $\beta = 0.87$ ,  $t = 37.14$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ).

In the 2nd analysis, results in Table 3 showed that age moderated the relationship between OCB and task performance ( $R^2 = 0.75$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ). As shown in Table 3 also, the prediction of task performance through age ( $\beta = -0.04$ ,  $t = 1.58$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and OCB ( $\beta = 0.85$ ,  $t = 32.71$ ,  $p < 0.0001$ ). In this stage, age moderated the relationship between OCB and task performance. In the 3rd analysis,

Table 3: Multiple regression analysis results of standardised beta coefficients of the moderating role of gender, age, educational level and tenure

Variables	Standardized coefficients	
	Beta ( $\beta$ )	t-test
OCB	0.87	37.14**
OCB	0.85	32.71**
Age	0.04	1.58*
OCB	0.88	40.96**
Age	0.05	2.42*
Gender	-0.28	-14.48**
OCB	0.79	26.30**
Age	0.08	3.71*
Gender	-0.28	-14.77**
Education	0.12	4.53**
OCB	0.79	25.95**
Age	0.06	.84
Gender	-0.28	-14.76**
Education	0.13	4.32**
Tenure	0.03	.43

\*\*p<0.0001; \*p<0.05

gender along with age moderated the relationship between OCB and task performance ( $R^2 = 0.84, p<0.0001$ ). As shown in Table 3, the prediction of task performance through gender ( $\beta = -0.28, t = -14.48, p<0.05$ ), age ( $\beta = -0.05, t = 2.42, p<0.05$ ) and OCB ( $\beta = 0.88, t = 40.96, p<0.0001$ ). In this stage, gender and age moderated the relationship between OCB and task performance.

In the 4th analysis, education along with age and gender moderated the relationship between OCB and task performance ( $R^2 = 0.84, p<0.0001$ ). The prediction of task performance through education ( $\beta = 0.12, t = 4.53, p<0.0001$ ), gender ( $\beta = -0.28, t = -14.77, p<0.0001$ ), age ( $\beta = -0.08, t = 3.71, p<0.05$ ) and OCB ( $\beta = 0.78, t = 26.30, p<0.0001$ ) is shown in Table 3. In this stage, education moderated the relationship between OCB and task performance. In the 5th analysis, tenure along with age, gender and education moderated the relationship between OCB and task performance ( $R^2 = 0.84, p<0.0001$ ). The prediction of task performance through tenure ( $\beta = 0.03, t = 0.43, p>0.05$ ), education ( $\beta = 0.13, t = 4.32, p<0.0001$ ), gender ( $\beta = -0.28, t = -14.76, p<0.0001$ ), age ( $\beta = -0.06, t = 0.84, p>0.05$ ) and OCB ( $\beta = 0.79, t = 25.95, p<0.0001$ ) are shown in Table 3. In this stage, tenure did not moderate the relationship between OCB and task. Overall, the variables of gender and education moderated the relationship between OCB and task performance but age and tenure did not moderate this relationship.

The results of this study showed that there was a positive significant relationship between organizational citizenship behaviour and its dimensions (loyalty, obedience, social participation, advocacy participation and functional participation) with task performance. It was also found that only obedience and social participation predicted task performance while other dimensions of

OCB such as loyalty, advocacy participation and functional participation did not predict task performance. The findings of this study were consistent with previous studies on such relationship (Posdakoff and MacKenzie, 1994; Lovell *et al.*, 1999; Podsakoff *et al.*, 2000; Cropanzano *et al.*, 2003; Organ *et al.*, 2006). The results are also consistent with Becker and Randall (1994) and Van Dyne *et al.* (1994)'s findings. There are several reasons why OCB was positively related with task performance (Smith *et al.*, 1983; Organ, 1988, 1990; George and Bettenhausen, 1990; Borman and Motowidlo, 1993; Posdakoff and MacKenzie, 1994).

The reasons are OCB enhances co-worker or managerial productivity, OCB serves as an effective means of coordinating activities between team members and across work groups and OCB enhances the organization's ability to attract and retain the best people by making it a more attractive place to work. Therefore, this justifies that OCB facilitates the effective functioning of organizations. Interpersonal OCB helps employees work together.

This study found that the variables of gender and education moderated the relationship between OCB and task performance but age and tenure did not moderate this relationship. Such results can be attributed to the cultural difference that may not have much influence on the exhibition of organizational citizenship behaviours within workplace. Allen and Rush (2001) and Farrell and Finkelstein (2007) found in their studies that gender could be considered as a determinant of OCB since women are expected to be more involved in OCB. Hartman *et al.* (1988) claimed that there is significant difference between men and women in task performance. He further reiterated that gender is a strong predictor of task performance.

As for education, Okpara (2004) found that workers with more education will be more concerned with performance and productivity. This was supported by Dalal (2005) who asserted that OCB will increase when education increases. Okpara (2004) and Dalal (2005) therefore, deduced that education could be considered as a determinant of OCB and task performance. Hence, this could explain the moderating role of gender and education on the relationship between OCB and task performance. Dalal (2005) stated that when education is high the OCB will also be high. This is because participants who were more educated tend to also be more concerned with performance and productivity (Okpara, 2004).

## CONCLUSION

The results found that there was a significant relationship between OCB dimensions of loyalty,

obedience, social participation, advocacy participation and functional participation and task performance. It was also shown that gender and education moderated the relationship between OCB and task performance. These findings provide important insights in understanding how employees perceived their task performance as influenced by OCB.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that future studies examine the cross-cultural impact on the comparison between Iranians welfare organization and welfare organizations in other Islamic developing countries. A cross-cultural research on public organization in the Islamic countries will give us an understanding of the roles of culture and religion in organization. This would give relevant information to the government and the policy makers as far as human resource development is concerned. The results of this study gave an insight on the general policies of organizations in Iran as well as policies pertaining to human resource. Thus, the findings have significant implications on the policies of human resource in public organizations in Iran.

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