

Organizational citizenship behavior and employee performance during the Covid-19 pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to identify factors influencing the organizational citizenship behavior of office employees and how those factors impact their performance during the Covid-19 pandemic. Qualitative research was conducted with twelve experts to evaluate and improve the scale. Quantitative research with the participation of 249 employees from service enterprises was carried out to measure and examine the above-mentioned correlation. The research findings indicate that job satisfaction, organizational justice, and organizational support during the pandemic have a positive impact on employees' organizational citizenship behavior, and this behavior also positively affects their performance. Managerial implications, limitations and recommendation for future research have been also discussed in this paper.

1. Introduction

Organizational citizenship behaviour is an employee's positive behaviour, which exceeds their formally assigned roles and responsibilities, such as regularly supporting or assisting other colleagues, and proactively contributing to the organization (Chelagat, Chepkwony, & Kemboi, 2015; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983). The behaviour also contributes to strengthening solidarity and cooperation among employees, which helps facilitate workflow as well as reduce stress while cooperatively working together. According to Sunday (2016), the performance organizational citizenship behaviour by employees also has an effect on increasing their performance.

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused lots of difficulties for businesses and individuals in society (Bao Ngoc, 2021). Companies have experienced many difficulties in doing business, anxiety and stresses have made individuals become less engaged and less positive toward their jobs and organizations (Le, 2021). Most companies are facing business decline, stagnation, and supply chain disruption (Dao, 2021). Given that situation, what do organizations need to do to make their employees feel secure in their jobs in order to continue contributing to the organization and maintaining good performance, and meet the requirements of challenging and unstable jobs in this period? What actions do companies need to take to satisfy their employees, provide them with perceived support and help them maintain their capacity as well as performance, and thereby they would significantly contribute to the company's growth in these difficult times of pandemic in return? This research aims to find answers to the above-mentioned concerns.

The purpose of this research is to find out the relationship between job satisfaction, organizational justice, and organizational support, which have positive impacts on employees' organizational citizenship behavior, especially during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and their behaviors positively affect their performance. The research will review the theoretical framework and propose the model, apply quantitative research with a sample of 280, analyze the survey results and then discuss some managerial implications in order to improve organizational citizenship behavior and achieve maximized employee performance.

2. Theoretical framework

According to Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986), and Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, and Rhoades (2001), Organizational Support Theory (OST) holds that whenever the employee perceives or recognize support from the organization, they could increase their organizational citizenship behavior, enhance their working efforts, engagement, positive behavior and performance. This theory is considered as a foundation framework for the model of this study.

According to Smith et al. (1983) and Organ (1988), employees' organizational citizenship behavior is the behavior that goes beyond their formal job duties in the organization, employees with these behaviors tend to help other colleagues in the organization, or dedicate and support the organization that they're working for. Employees' organizational citizenship behavior may impact organizational performance through their positive actions (Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997), or employees who behave with professional integrity have a tendency to maintain their stably high job performance, which contributes to sustaining productivity. Positive actions of employees' organizational citizenship behavior result in their own work effectiveness, and then benefit the entire company.

2.1. Organizational citizenship behavior

Organ (1988) and Eisenberger et al. (2001) defined organizational citizenship behaviors as intermittent behaviors of individuals in the organization, which are not directly or explicitly recognized in the company's compensation and reward system and these behaviors play a role in enhancing organizational effectiveness. Organ (1988) emphasized three main aspects of employee organizational citizenship behavior which are voluntary nature, contribution to the organizational effectiveness, and multi-dimensional concept.

2.2. Employee performance

Employees' performance is evaluated through several criteria such as their contribution to the organization's success, always accomplishing tasks by the deadline, satisfying all requirements of superiors, and being one of the best employees in the organization (Chen & Francesco, 2003). Chelagat et al. (2015) and Kazan and Gumus (2013) evaluated employee performance in their studies through employees' behaviors such as putting a great effort into their work, understanding the importance of their jobs, and always completing assigned tasks, and feeling suitable for the job.

2.3. The relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and employee performance

Troena and Noermijati (2013) identified that it is important for organizations to consider all factors impacting organizational citizenship behavior and encourage employees to engage in organizational citizenship behavior to increase their job performance and improve organizational performance as a result. Positive behavior by employees such as accomplishing tasks, and objectives, and providing colleagues with supportive and constructive ideas on a regular basis will contribute to increasing employees' performance. Simultaneously, the research by Chelagat et al.

(2015) has proven that organizational citizenship behavior has a positive impact on employees' performance. Performing organizational citizenship behavior also significantly influences boosting employees' performance (Sunday, 2016).

2.4. Precursors affecting organizational citizenship behavior

Job satisfaction

According to Mohamed (2016), job satisfaction is a precursor of organizational citizenship behavior. Job satisfaction plays an extremely important role as it contributes to increasing productivity, reducing labor costs, enhancing cooperation among employees as well as enabling employees to contribute more to the company (Sageer, Rafat, & Agarwal, 2012).

Organizational justice Intaraprasong, Dityen, Krugkrunit, and Subhadrabandhu (2012) and Swaminathan and Jawahar (2013) mentioned the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior.

Organizational justice was defined as fair treatment for all individuals in the workplace, which affects employees' behaviors towards work (Moorman, 1991; Nadiri & Tanova, 2010). Williams, Pitre, and Zainuba (2002); Buluc (2015); Ayinde and Oladele (2016) argue that employees will increasingly engage in organizational citizenship behavior if their managers/superiors treat them positively.

Organizational support

Support from an organization significantly influences employees' attitudes and behaviors towards their work, which has a positive relationship with organizational commitment, job satisfaction, job performance, and employee engagement trend towards their organization (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

2.5. Research model

Based on previous studies, the research model is built with following hypotheses:

H1: Job satisfaction has positive impact on employee organizational citizenship behavior

H2: Distributive justice has positive impact on employee organizational citizenship behavior

H3: Procedural justice has positive impact on employee organizational citizenship behavior

H4: Interactional justice has positive impact on employee organizational citizenship behavior

H5: Organizational support has positive impact on employee organizational citizenship behavior

H6: Organizational citizenship behavior of the crew has a positive impact on employee performance

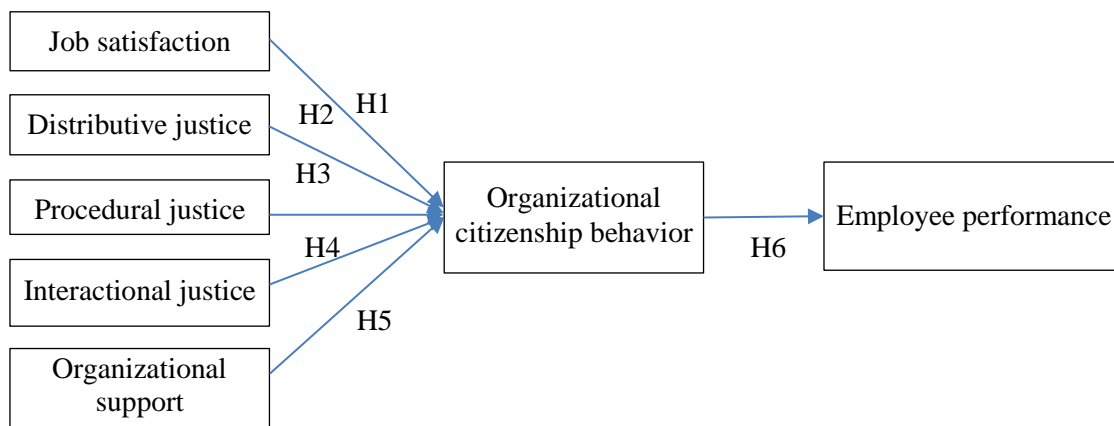


Figure 1. Research model

3. Research methodology

3.1. Building the scale

Job satisfaction

According to Mohamed (2016), job satisfaction is a sense of happiness someone gains from evaluating the job they are undertaking. The definition consists of two dimensions which are cognitive (their evaluation of their jobs) and affective (expression towards the job), expressing the degree to which individuals feel positive or negative about their jobs. Employee's job satisfaction includes two factors, which are intrinsic job satisfaction - considered as motivating factors, and extrinsic job satisfaction - defined as hygiene factors (Baylor, 2010; Mohamed, 2016).

Organizational justice

According to Nadiri and Tanova (2010), present studies defined organizational justice consists of three main forms and they are distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice.

Organizational support

According to Eisenberger et al. (2001), organizational support shows how close the employee-organization relationship is by recognizing employees' contribution to the organization, which makes them believe that the organization values their contribution, is willing to reward their efforts, and cares about their well-being.

Organizational citizenship behavior

Organizational citizenship behavior is characterized by intermittent, voluntary, conscientious behaviors towards work that sometimes exceed the formal job requirement. These behaviors are not directly or explicitly recognized by the organizational formal compensation and reward system, and they play a role in boosting organizational effectiveness (Organ, 1988).

Employee performance

Employees' performance shows the outcomes, organizational objectives, completing assigned tasks by the deadline, satisfy all the job requirements by superiors. Chelagat et al. (2015) and Kazan and Gumus (2013) evaluated employee performance in their studies through employee behaviors such as putting a great effort into their work, understanding the importance of their jobs, always accomplishing assigned tasks, and feeling suitable for the job. According to Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1997), employee organizational citizenship behavior may affect organizational performance through positive activities of employees.

3.2. Research methodology

Qualitative research: Using the questionnaire, which was written in previous studies, the researchers conducted a qualitative survey by interviewing 05 experts who hold a doctorate degree and have a deep understanding of the field of human resource management with more than 10 years of experience and 07 human resource managers in companies with more than 07 years of experience in the field. The implementation method is a focus group discussion to check the validity of the questionnaire and at the same time find out more new factors related to organizational support and fairness during the pandemic, thereby adjusting the observed variables to be appropriate for the nature and scope of the study. The survey was conducted over 03 hours in September 2020.

Quantitative research: It is required that the minimum sample size is 05 times as much as the total number of the observed variables. In this research, there are a total of 47 observed

variables, so the minimum sample size must be 235 interviewed (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham 1998; Nguyen, 2011). In order to enhance the representativeness of the sample and the reliability of the research, the research was conducted with 280 observed employees working in service companies aged 20-50 years old. Data was collected by sending the participants the questionnaires for face-to-face interviews and then having them implement the survey on the Internet, on social networks, or via colleagues and friends. The most convenient method was chosen to facilitate the procedure of data collection in the context in which it is difficult to collect data during the pandemic. The time for the implementation of the quantitative survey was from November 2020 to May 2021.

The SPSS 22 software was used to analyze the survey results. The reliability and value of the scale were preliminarily assessed by Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). Finally, the study used the multiple regression analysis methods with linear correlation to test motivational factors that have important impacts on the performance of the employees in the companies.

4. Research results

4.1. Qualitative research results

The results of the qualitative survey show that the additional observed variable for Job satisfaction is: satisfaction with the unchanged salary policy during the pandemic. For the scale of justice in the distribution of the organization, the experts suggest adding an additional scale: appropriate material compensation for the difficulties that employees must endure during the pandemic. For the scale of interactional justice, the experts suggest adding care, motivation, and trust from employers towards employees during the pandemic. The experts also suggest adding a scale: care from employers towards employees' families.

4.2. Research sample characteristics

The research sample includes 249 employees who are working at service companies that are much affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. The results show that there are 68% female and 32% male employees. In terms of age, 49% of the employees are 18 - 29 years old; those from 30 - 39 years old account for 38%; those from 40 - 49 years old account for 13%. In terms of seniority, 27% of the employees work for 01 - 03 years, 39% of the employees work for 04 - 07 years, 23% of the employees work for 08 - 10 years, 8% of the employees work for 11 - 15 years, and 3% of the employees work for more than 15 years. In terms of occupation, the sales staff account for 39%; the marketing staff account for 24%; the administration staff, human resource staff, and other departments staff account for 37%. In terms of income, 27% have an income of 05 - 10 million; 42% have an income of 10 - 20 million, and those who have an income of 20 million or more account for 31%. In terms of education, the majority of the employees have undergraduate degrees, accounting for 56%, those who have postgraduate degree account for 27%, and the rest account for 17%.

Scale testing

The reliability of the research scales was assessed via Cronbach's Alpha coefficient analysis. The results show that the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients all satisfy the condition in which they are greater than 0.6 and the correlation coefficient of the total variables is greater than 0.3 (Hair et al., 1998), so the scales are remained in the model to run EFA (Table 1). The Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is satisfactory when this coefficient is greater than 0.5; at the same time, the coefficient that measures the relevance of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sample must be greater than or equal to 0.5; the cumulative variance is greater than or equal to 50%, and

Eigenvalue is greater than 1 (Nguyen, 2011).

The results of factor analysis illustrate independent variables including Job Satisfaction (JS), Distributive Justice (DJ), Procedural Justice (PJ), Interactional Justice (IJ), Organizational Support (PS). We see that the $KMO = 0.85 > 0.5$ coefficient factor analysis is compatible with the research data. The results of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity have $Sig = 0.000$, so the observed variables are correlated with each other in the overall range. The cumulative variance is 69.474% which is greater than 50%; the stop point achieves the Eigenvalues of $2.032 > 1$ (satisfactory).

The scale of organizational citizenship behavior has 9 observed variables, but 1 variable is excluded. After the EFA factor analysis, the KMO coefficient is $0.789 > 0.5$, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity has $Sig = 0.000$, proving that the factor analysis is appropriate for the research data. The cumulative of variance is 66.178 % (greater than 50%); the stop point achieves the Eigenvalues of $3.971 > 1$ (satisfactory).

Table 1

Scale testing and factor analysis results

No.	Concepts	Number of variables observed	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient	Factor loading
1	Job satisfaction	7	0.899	0.795; 0.771; 0.772; 0.778; 0.831; 0.809; Excluded
2	Distributive justice	5	0.874	0.795; 0.771; Excluded; 0.772; 0.778
3	Procedural justice	6	0.883	0.865; Excluded; 0.730; 0.777; 0.814; 0.868
4	Interactional justice	6	0.895	0.707; 0.773; 0.774; Excluded; 0.873; 0.869
5	Organizational support	9	0.894	0.787; 0.765; 0.750; 0.788; Excluded; 0.842; 0.836
6	Organizational citizenship behavior	9	0.896	Excluded; 0.754; 0.824; 0.773; 0.841; 0.811; 0.872
7	Employee performance	5	0.758	0.655; 0.719; 0.710; 0.769; 0.715

Source: Calculating of the author

The performance scale includes 05 observed variables. After the EFA factor analysis, the KMO coefficient is $0.804 > 0.5$, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity has $Sig = 0.000$, so the variables are correlated with each other in the overall range. The cumulative variance is 51.051% (greater than 50%); the stop point achieves the Eigenvalues of $2.553 > 1$ (satisfactory).

Correlation analysis

The correlation coefficients between the dependent variable of OB and the independent variables of JS, DJ, PJ, IJ, PS are shown in Table 2. These correlation coefficients which are significant at the 99% confidence level show that independent variables can be included in the model to explain the dependent variable. In addition, the correlation coefficients between the independent variables and the dependent variable do not exceed the conditional coefficient of 0.850 (Hair et al., 1998). This proves that the discriminant validity has been achieved. In other words, the scales in this study can measure different research concepts.

Table 2

Correlation analysis

Factor	JS	DJ	PJ	IJ	PS	OB
JS	1					
DJ	0.253	1				
PJ	0.147	0.311	1			
IJ	0.349	0.312	0.282	1		
PS	0.272	0.029	0.019	0.299	1	
OB	0.517	0.484	0.433	0.542	0.350	1

Source: Calculating of the author

The correlation coefficients between the independent variable of OB and the dependent variable of EP are shown in the table.

Table 3

Correlation coefficients

Factor	OB	EP
OB	1	
EP	0.713	1

Source: Calculating of the author

Regression analysis

Linear regression analysis 01 includes 01 dependent variables of organizational citizenship behavior of the crew staff and 05 independent variables of job satisfaction, distributive justice, procedural justice, interactional justice, and organizational support.

$$OB = 0.281 * JS + 0.258 * DJ + 0.241 * PJ + 0.238 * IJ + 0.190 * PS \quad (1)$$

Table 4

Regression coefficients

Factor	Standardized Beta	Sig.	Multicollinearity analysis	
			Variable Tolerance	VIF Coefficient
JS	0.281	0.000	0.820	1.220
DJ	0.258	0.000	0.822	1.216
PJ	0.241	0.000	0.862	1.160
IJ	0.238	0.000	0.744	1.344
PS	0.190	0.000	0.866	1.155
Dependent variable: Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OB)				
- Adjusted R2 = 0.561				
- Durbin-Watson coefficient = 2.236				
- F value = 64.304 and Sig = 0.000				

Source: Calculating of the author

The analysis results show that job satisfaction has the strongest impact on organizational citizenship behavior (0.281). This means that the greater the job satisfaction of the employees is, the more motivated they are to exhibit organizational citizenship behaviors. The job satisfaction of employees is thanks to the salary policy, working conditions, relationships among employees, and perception of their work from those who are around them.

Justice in distribution, procedure, and interaction has a strong impact on organizational citizenship behavior (0.258; 0.241; 0.238). Among the three factors of organizational justice, distributive justice (beta coefficient = 0.258) has the biggest impact on organizational citizenship behavior. This shows that for the employees the most important factor in having voluntary and positive behaviors when they work at companies is all the benefits they receive from the organizations including salary, bonus, allowance, and other benefits which are provided fully and are worth their efforts during the pandemic so that they will try their best for their work. This also makes sense because distributive justice directly affects the benefits that the employees receive from the organizations.

Organizational support has the weakest impact on organizational citizenship behavior (0.190). The support from the organizations is the fact that the organizations recognize the efforts and contributions of the employees during the working process towards the success of the company, and it also shows the care and concern of the companies regarding the employees' working conditions, and health and safety. This shows when organizations care for and support their employees, they have and promote behaviors which are positive, voluntary, and extra-role in the working process.

Linear regression model 2 includes the independent variable of organizational citizenship behavior and the dependent variable of employee performance effectiveness.

$$EP = 0.713 * OB \quad (2)$$

Table 5

Regression coefficients

Factor	Standardized Beta	Sig.	Multicollinearity Analysis	
			Variable Tolerance	VIF Coefficient
OB	0.713	0.000	1.000	1.000
Dependent variable: Employee Performance (EP)				
- Adjusted R ² = 0.506				
- Durbin-Watson coefficient = 1.924				
- F value = 254.947 and Sig = 0.000				

Source: Calculating of the author

The results show that organizational citizenship behavior has a strong impact on employee performance (0.713). This shows that organizational citizenship behavior will improve the productivity of employees and enhance cooperation between employees and managers.

5. Conclusion and implications for management

Quantitative research results (n = 249) show that there is a correlation between job satisfaction, justice in distribution - procedure - interaction, organizational support, and organizational citizenship behavior. Besides, organizational citizenship behavior has impact on the performance of Vietnamese employees.

Specifically, job satisfaction has the strongest impact on employees' civic behaviors. For employees to have positive behavioral manifestations, managers need to have appropriate salary and bonus policies, provide proper care for and take care of their employees' lives, and be ready to support and help their employees. This result is consistent with Intaraprasong et al. (2012) and Swaminathan and Jawahar (2013).

Distributive justice has the strongest impact on organizational citizenship behavior among the three factors of justice. Employees exhibit voluntary and positive behaviors in their work when they realize that all the benefits they receive from the organization are fair and worth their efforts during the difficult period of the pandemic. This is consistent with the research results of Williams et al. (2002) which show that employees' organizational citizenship behavior increases if employees receive positive treatment from their supervisors.

Procedural justice also has a strong impact on organizational citizenship behavior. If such evaluation procedures and processes are built into a complete system, and evaluation information and data are collected in a clear, accurate, and unbiased manner, employees disclose organizational citizenship behavior. This result is consistent with the study by Buluc (2015) which shows that there is a positive correlation between the two factors of procedural justice in the organization and the organizational citizenship behavior of employees.

Interactional justice affects employees' positive, voluntary and extra-role behaviors in the working process. When employees feel that their managers respect them, treat them politely, do not discriminate against them with others, and do not violate the code of conduct in the performance evaluation process, their perception of interactional justice is greater, which has a strong impact on the manifestations of their positive and voluntary behaviors. Research by Ayinde and Oladele (2016) determined that there is a positive correlation between interactional justice and organizational citizenship behaviors of employees.

Organizational support impacts employees' citizenship behavior. This shows that if employees feel that the organizations respect and recognize their contributions to their success, then they will have stronger trust in the organization and voluntarily carry out positive behaviors beyond the role that is beneficial to the development of the organization. This is consistent with the research results of Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) on organizational support and its benefits which show that organizational support also has a positive role in motivating employees to exhibit behaviors that are extra-role and benefit the organization.

Organizational citizenship behavior has a strong impact on employee performance. Specifically, organizational citizenship behavior will improve employee productivity, and enhance the ability to cooperate between employees and managers. This result is consistent with the research results of Chelagat et al. (2015) which show organizational citizenship behavior has a positive impact on employee performance.

Implications for management

From the research results, we find that organizational citizenship behavior plays an extremely important role in having impact on the work results of employees during the pandemic (0.713). Motivating employees to give their best in the working process, enhancing positive relationships and cooperation among employees, and reducing stress in the working process will help their work achieve better results.

Companies need to reconsider their salary and bonus policies that are in line with the difficulties and efforts of employees during the pandemic and that are worth their effort to improve employee satisfaction, retain excellent employees and improve work efficiency.

Companies should have appropriate material compensation for the hardships their employees suffer from during the pandemic, which makes them feel the distributive fairness of the organizations.

During the pandemic, crises and pressure are always the burdens on employees. If managers show their care, have concerns, and give motivation and trust to their employees, this will help them maintain positive behaviors at work and in the organization. The working spirit of cooperation and mutual care during the pandemic is very important to build the connection among individuals as well as between individuals and organizations to overcome difficulties together.

Companies should care about their employees' thoughts, personal lives, and family lives. Specifically, during the pandemic, companies should pay proper care to the family life of individuals and ensure a reasonable distribution of working time so that employees may feel assured to be against the pandemic and take care of their family matters. Companies should have an insurance policy that protects employees' family members to encourage them to make efforts to contribute to the organizations.

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