

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION, JOB SATISFACTION – PREDICTORS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR?

Virgil GHEORGHE

National University of Political Studies and Public Administration,
30A Expozitiei Blvd., sector 1, 012104 Bucharest, RO
virgilgheorghe23@yahoo.com

Abstract. *Interpersonal relationships are a driving force in our lives. Most people report that the quality of their lives is determined by the number and standard of their interpersonal relationships. In organizational settings, effective communication is a crucial variable in determining the success of interpersonal relationships. Interpersonal communication, the process by which people exchange information, feelings, and meaning through verbal and non-verbal messages, is of considerable importance for an organization, as it predictor of the success, concurrently being able to create the adequate background within an organization, for leaders to efficiently and effectively implement organizational strategies. Defined as a person's global feeling regarding his/her job and the various aspects or facets thereof, job satisfaction is a topic of wide interest when it comes to improving organizational performance and the quality of working life. There is an increased interest in better understanding employee behaviors and in identifying the main factors that could augment job satisfaction, improve business productivity and customer satisfaction, reduce costs, and diminish the turnover and absenteeism rates. The construct of organizational citizenship behavior has been subject to intense research over the past three decades. Being considered as an individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system of an organization, it has been shown to increase organizational effectiveness by creating a stable social and psychological climate. The current study aims at investigating the relationships between interpersonal communication, the various dimensions of job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior. The results of this research are discussed in the light of the previous empirical findings. They are useful for understanding the relationship between the selected variables, as they raise interesting policy issues related to the implementation of different organizational programs aimed at enhancing the personnel interpersonal communication, at increasing employee job satisfaction, and subsequently organizational citizenship behavior, thus managing to improve an organization's performance.*

Keywords: *interpersonal communication; external perception; internal disservice; job satisfaction; organizational citizenship behavior.*

Introduction

The current global economic competition entails considerable challenge for organisational life. There is an increased interest in identifying the main factors that could improve an organisation's performance, allowing it to achieve its goals and objectives.

Interpersonal communication in the workplace is very important for employees, considering psychosocial adaptation role, the achievement of personal goals, and the development of interpersonal relations in the organisational context. It brings unity of interests and efforts, also keeping employees informed about the internal relationships and the external environment relevant to a task, and of interest to the organization (Khetarpal, 2010).

Interpersonal communication is inescapable, irreversible, complex and contextual, all these characteristics making it a communicative phenomenon requiring in-depth study.

Literature review

According to Campbell (2011), face-to-face interpersonal communication is characterized by two factors: external perception and internal disconnection. External perception defines an individual's ability to interact with others, and it was found to predict an individual's perception ability, gender, and their ability to communicate with others. Internal disconnection refers to one's desire to remove the distance between the individuals, which they are communicating, and it was discovered to predict an individual's desire to communicate, flexibility and competence with regards to communication. As interpersonal communication is thought to maintain proper relationships in the workplace, it is important to understand the variability of its impact on the dimensions of job satisfaction.

Organisational citizenship behavior refers to anything that employees choose to do, spontaneously and of their own accord, which often lies outside of their specified contractual obligations. In other words, it is discretionary (Zhang, 2011). Citizenship behaviors come in many distinct shapes and forms, are recognized by the formal reward system, and promote ratings of employee performance and effective functioning of the organization (Organ, 1997; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine & Bachrach, 2000).

In recent years, there has been an increased interest in the topic of organisational citizenship behavior, but no consensus has been reached after examining the outcomes of citizenship behaviors within organizations. Overall, more than 30 dimensions of organisational citizenship behavior have been identified over time, but there is huge overlapping in these terms. Podsakoff et al. (2000) have classified these into seven common dimensions: helping behavior, sportsmanship, organisational loyalty, organisational compliance, individual initiative, civic virtue, and self-development.

Organisational citizenship is a part of organisational behavior, where the employee considers himself/herself as part of the group he/she is serving. Survey results stressed the relationship between the decrease of employee turnover and absenteeism, and the increase of efficiency and customer satisfaction, as well as the reduction of costs (Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff & Blume, 2009).

Findings indicate significant positive correlation coefficients between job satisfaction and organisational citizenship behavior (Shokrkon & Naami, 2009), as well as a high job satisfaction level that leads to individual willingness to cooperate, that leads to

organisational citizenship behavior (Intaraprasong, Warunee, Krugkrunjit & Subhadrabandhu, 2012).

Given that organisational citizenship behavior has such a significant impact on the productivity and efficiency of an organization, and that workers do not expect any reimbursement for their efforts, organisational citizenship behavior should be considered an efficient way of improving profitability and of reducing costs, for example by lowering the absenteeism and turnover rates (Zhang, 2011).

Job satisfaction can be defined as an employee's attitude towards his/her job, considering the economic aspects of work, interpersonal relationships, activities, tasks, and working conditions. Job satisfaction is multi-dimensional in nature. There are various studies concerning the analysis of factors constructed to explain what makes people satisfied with their jobs (Manisera, Dusseldrop & Kooij, 2005; Staples & Higgins, 1998).

Kondalkar (1988) operationalized the main factors that determine job satisfaction of employees in an organization. Work content is a significant factor of satisfaction. A positive evaluation of the content of work will get the sense of satisfaction. Pay and promotion policy play a decisive part in ensuring a high level of motivation, and job satisfaction. An employee's wages/salary should ensure him/her a social status and should be able to fulfil his/her expectations. Supportive working conditions consist of an adequate technology level and procedures, yet comfort will also display a great degree of satisfaction. Supervision is a moderate factor, which influences job satisfaction through the qualification level to advice, guidance, and problem solving. Personality-job fit, matched up with the job activities, will generate a high level of job satisfaction. The work group offers a source of support, comfort, and assistance for employees, and makes the job more enjoyable.

The important aspects that influence job satisfaction are the quality of interpersonal relationships with co-workers or superiors, and the creation of the general atmosphere in the workplace (Rogelberg et al., 2010), therefore we can consider that the work group support factor is essential for job satisfaction. All these factors are assessed by employees in terms of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

One of the earliest lines of research into the nature of job satisfaction stressed the influence of the groups of factors associated with individual and situational characteristics, therefore they should be considered together as representing the dimensions which contribute to determining the level of job satisfaction (Sypniewska, 2014). Job satisfaction is also a moderator factor which affects work force (Robertson, Birch, & Cooper, 2012), making it fully motivated and committed to high productivity (Judge & Bono, 2001). These findings, taken as a whole, indicate the importance of individual assessment, and the contextual factors that might influence the expected positive behaviors.

Given the importance of organisational citizenship behavior as the organisational outcome variable, this paper stresses the problem of identifying the relationship between interpersonal communication, job satisfaction, and organisational citizenship behavior, and creates a practical involvement of a managerially actionable factor in the effectiveness of organisational functioning. Thus, organisational citizenship behavior

depends on the form of the relationship between interpersonal communication and job satisfaction.

Specifically, we come up with the following hypotheses:

H1. Interpersonal communication is positively related to organisational citizenship behavior.

H2. Job satisfaction is positively related to organisational citizenship behavior.

Methods

All variables used in this study were assessed by means of online surveys using self-report measures. In order to get the relevant data, we used the following instruments:

Interpersonal Communication Scale. The construct of face-to-face communication is operationalized as a form consisting of two factors designed in a seven-item Interpersonal Communication Scale (ICS) developed by Jared Campbell (2011), used for measuring internal and external dimensions. External perception defines an individual's ability to interact with others, while internal disaversion refers to one's desire to remove the distance between the individuals, which they are communicating. The questionnaire is answered using a 7-item Likert scale. For the validity test, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was calculated for the overall scale (ICS Scale $\alpha = .729$), and for both its sub-scales (external perception $\alpha = .632$, and internal disaversion $\alpha = .581$) (Campbell, 2013).

Job Satisfaction Scale. The dimensions of job satisfaction (nature of work and communication) were assessed using the Job Satisfaction Scale (JSS) developed by Paul E. Spector (1994). This is a 36 item, nine facets scale, designed to assess employee attitudes about the job and aspects of the job. Each facet is assessed by means of four items, and a total score is computed based on all the items. The scale was significantly related to workplace factors such as pay, promotion, supervision, fringe, co-workers, nature of work, communication. The Cronbach's Alpha was found to be $\alpha = .84$ for this scale.

Organisational Citizenship Behavior Checklist (OCB-C), developed by Suzy Fox and Paul E. Spector (2011), was used in the present study. This instrument stresses the altruistic acts that help co-workers deal with personal issues, as opposed to workplace issues or the acts that benefit the organization. The 20 items of the OCB-C use a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = never to 5 = every day. The total score is the sum of responses to all items; the lowest score is 5, and the highest score is 100. The Cronbach's Alpha was found to be $\alpha = .89$ and $\alpha = .94$ for two self-report samples, and also $\alpha = .94$ for a co-worker sample (co-workers reporting on the target employee) (Spector, 2011).

Following the discussed methodology, the data was derived from a convenience sample consisting of 102 participants, of which 62 were females and 40 were males. They were all employees coming from both public (43 participants) and private sector (59 participants) organizations in Romania, aged between 21 and 61 ($M=38,88$; $SD=6,28$), with work experience structured in three clusters (under 6 years - 14

participants, between 7 and 15 years – 69 participants, over 15 years – 19 participants).

The present study has a cross-sectional and correlational layout, all questionnaires being self-reported.

Results

As shown in Table 01, the highest scores for interpersonal communication factors were obtained for external perception ($M=13.55$, $SD=3.46$). Regarding the job satisfaction values, the perception of the nature of work ($M=20.32$, $SD=2.25$) indicates higher levels as opposed to communication ($M=17.68$, $SD=3.89$), while the total scores for the organisational citizenship behavior ($M=82.73$, $SD=14.16$) indicate a high value in the scale range. Also, the analysis of Skeweness and Kurtosis showed that data distribution is normal.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics (Interpersonal Communication - IC, Job Satisfaction - JS, Organisational Citizenship Behavior - OCB, $N = 102$)

	Mean Statistics	Std. Deviation Statistics
IC - External Perception	13.55	3.46
IC - Internal Disseverance	11.73	2.64
IC - Total Scores	25.27	5.44
JS - Nature of work	20.32	2.25
JS - Communication	17.68	3.89
JS - Total Scores	142.27	13.13
OCB - Total Scores	82.73	14.16

Hypothesis one (H1) predicted that interpersonal communication is positively related to organisational citizenship behavior. The current hypothesis correlations between the respective scales were calculated for the test. The results show a positive significant correlation between organisational citizenship behavior and interpersonal communication factors - external perception ($r=.535$, $p<.0.05$), internal disseverance ($r=.548$, $p<.0.01$), and total scores ($r=.606$, $p<.0.01$).

The second hypothesis (H2) predicted that job satisfaction is positively related to organisational citizenship behavior. Indeed, the total scores of OCB showed positive significant correlation with the Total Score of JS ($r=.461$, $p<.0.05$). Moving one step further, the Communication scale of job satisfaction showed significant positive correlations with the organisational citizenship behavior scores ($r=0.478$, $p<.0.05$), whilst no statistically significant relationships were found between the other scales of the studied dimensions.

Following an exploratory approach, several significant gender differences were noticed. Table 02 presents the comparison between male and female participants,

regarding total scores on interpersonal communication, job satisfaction, and organisational citizenship behavior.

Thus, the score obtained by females was significantly higher than the male interpersonal communication scale ($M=26.65$, $SD=4.41$), on two of its sub-scales, i.e. external perception and internal disservice ($M=14.06$, $SD=3.21$ and $M=12.59$, $SD=2.03$), whereas job satisfaction and organisational citizenship behavior revealed a higher score for males ($M=143.35$, $SD=13.78$, and $M=85.76$, $SD=9.03$) than for females ($M=138.60$, $SD=11.10$ and $M=72.40$, $SD=13.55$).

Table 2. Group statistics (demographic comparative analysis Gender vs. Interpersonal Communication - IC, Job Satisfaction - JS, Organisational Citizenship Behavior - OCB, N = 102)

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
IC - External Perception	Male	40	11.80	4.09
	Female	62	14.06	3.21
IC - Internal Disservice	Male	40	8.80	2.49
	Female	62	12.59	2.03
IC - Total Scores	Male	40	20.60	6.50
	Female	62	26.65	4.41
JS - Total Scores	Male	40	143.35	13.78
	Female	62	138.60	11.10
OCB - Total Scores	Male	40	85.76	9.03
	Female	62	72.40	13.55

Discussion

The positive correlation between interpersonal communication and organisational citizenship behavior is not surprising. Looking further to the positive correlations between organisational citizenship behavior and external perception, and also between organisational citizenship behavior and internal disservice, we can conclude that a high level of communication inside the work group establishes a common level of understanding, directing an organisational common effort towards the achievement of targets and goals.

The results point out to conclusions that are similar to those of other studies. When employees adopt a relational orientation and enhance social capital (Bolino, Turnley & Bloodgood, 2002), they engage the organisational citizenship motives or goals (Bolino, 1999; Grant et al., 2009), and facilitate organisational performance (Podsakoff et al., 2009).

External perception, defined as an individual's ability to interact with others, reveals different types of competence to create an adequate climate for work interactions. According to Bubas (2001), communicators should effectively decode other people's messages, and also produce their own messages in an efficient and appropriate way, they should also be able to integrate themselves in the social environment, to manage

social interactions, and to achieve communions of mutual interest and bonds with members.

Smith et al. (1983) stated that organisational citizenship behavior consists of two types of employee behavior. The first type, altruism, indicates helping behaviors aimed directly at specific persons. The second type, conscientiousness, is defined as “a more impersonal sort of conscientiousness, more of a “good soldier” or “good citizen” syndrome of performing activities that are “right and proper””. For instance, they promote developing the individual’s relationships and create an effective social network. Further, organisational citizenship behavior research indicates that employees are more likely to engage in these actions when they are conscientious and feel positive treated by their organizations (Organ et al., 2006).

The present study was designed to explore the relationship between job satisfaction and their organisational citizenship behavior. Congruent with previous researches, we found a significant positive correlation between those variables there stated hypothesis H2. Those results indicate that improving job satisfaction influence people to contribute more to the organization and lobbying to help colleagues and encourage voluntary contributions to have important implications for organisational effectiveness (Organ, 1997, Tsai & Wu, 2010). If employees are satisfied with their jobs, the results will translate into improved internal and external customer service, which also increases customer satisfaction.

The recent studies suggest that engaging in citizenship may also have positive consequences for high-optimism individuals (e.g., higher job satisfaction) or negative (e.g., increased job stress and work-family conflict) (Munyon, Hochwarter, Perrewé & Ferris, 2010; Halbesleben, Harvey & Bolino, 2009). Further on, the impact of the gender demographic variable on organisational citizenship behavior was also explored. This was accomplished by examining the comparison of the three dimensions – interpersonal communication (with the external perception and internal disservice scales), job satisfaction, and organisational citizenship behavior (with gender). The average was higher for females than for males, with respect to interpersonal communication, on two of its sub-scales, i.e. external perception and internal disservice, whereas job satisfaction and organisational citizenship behavior revealed a higher score for males than for females.

Research studies examining gender differences help us understand the social behavior of men and women. They revealed that women are more concerned than men with understanding the needs of other team members, the lubricating tense relationship among members, and helping others (Bridges, 1989). On the other hand, men often adhere to an increased focus on the self, on their own roles, have a stronger inclination than women for conscientiousness, openly sharing their knowledge and opinions, and perform more positive high-risk citizenship behaviors (Kidder, 2001).

This empirical evidence supports the findings of some other studies, which revealed that women face greater expectations to be helpful and cooperative, while men face greater expectations to work extra hours and speak out about organisational issues (Heilman & Chen, 2005).

Conclusions

This research performs an objective exploration of factors such as interpersonal communication and job satisfaction, in order to increase the levels of organisational citizenship behavior. It can be used as a valuable guide for identifying the patterns of the dimensions entailed by organisational citizenship behavior, showing managers how to adapt their assessment and development programs in order to create a climate of trust, spontaneity, and empathy.

A better management system should encourage organisational citizenship behavior, which enhances organisational effectiveness. Interpersonal communication and job satisfaction are partial factors in the organization of motivation systems for the employees. Thus, the overall job contentment consists of an evaluation of all the individual factors pertaining to incentive schemes.

Due to the advent of technology and to globalization, more and more competitive challenges are changing the landscape of today's organizations. In order to survive, the organizations are forced to seek new ways to gain an advantage. Therefore, it is vital to understand how a more positive workplace influences employees, by helping them maximize their individual potential and value, as well as by maximizing service and effectiveness. Currently, employees expect a fair and humane workplace and wish to be treated as individuals. In order to develop a durable organisational environment, and to avoid conflicts, work groups should mainly aim at helping employees maximize their individual skills and value, as well as at maximizing engagement and performance.

Interpersonal communication, as an individual's competence to form relationships, and the job satisfaction dimension, will enhance the cluster of behaviors that benefit an organization and the individuals within it. The results attempt to help organizations, as they bring to light a way of building the right relationships meant to improve performance both at the individual, and at the organization level. The author would like to acknowledge that these dimensions cannot influence organisational citizenship behavior without taking into consideration the many different contexts of organisational relationships.

The present study has some limitations, which suggest useful directions for future research. One limitation concerns the control data. The study has a cross-sectional and correlational layout, all questionnaires being self-reported. Usually, the data does not reflect any ongoing transformations that might influence the relationships between variables, and it cannot provide causal explanations. It is also important to acknowledge that the conclusions presented in this thesis are based on a limited number of participants, and on an uneven gender distribution, the sampling being based on organizations of different types and dimensions.

Despite its limited scope, this study offers a few important guidelines for future research. As an extension of this study, it should attempt to improve the performed analysis by directly observing subjects and organizations over time, and also it would be useful for it to examine the relationship between organisational citizenship behavior and organisational commitment.

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