

Exploring and Measuring The Level of Psychological Empowerment (PE) and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) Among Government Employees- How They Relate Each Other?

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Abstract

This study aims firstly, to measure the level of Psychological Empowerment (PE) and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) as perceived by federal government staff working in Sabah, and secondly to identify the link between PE and OCB. There are 4 dimensions of PE which are meaning, competence, self-determination and impact while there are 5 dimension of OCB which are altruism, courtesy, civic virtue, sportsmanship and conscientiousness. 145 usable questionnaires were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and the instruments are deemed reliable with acceptance range of Cronbach alpha values. The level of PE and OCB in general is high. This shows that the government staff in Sabah show high level of PE and OCB in general. The relationship between PE and OCB was also tested and the results show a significant positive relationship between PE and OCB. In other words, it is proven that positive PE results in positive OCB. The implications of the research findings are also discussed in the study.

Keywords

Psychological Empowerment, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Government Employees, Sabah

I. Introduction

Managing people and a pool of talents have never been an easy task as compared to handling a computer or machines that can be programmed. No any employers can do the task without human resource. A business process cannot be managed only with a machines help, although we completely aware of how technology advancement in our era has brought a significant impact. Thus, employees are very important people and without their presence and contribution, companies will not be able to achieve their goals. Today's world, employees are known as partners of an organization, they are viewed as more than just the human resource of a company. Thus, managers need to acquire themselves with leadership skills and employees must be able to responsible and well-managed in delivering their tasks. Based on study by Scarpello and Ledvinka (2006), empowerment is about improving and enhancing workers talent and skills in order to achieve constant improvement in organizational function. Power and control analysis in organizations reveals that sharing the power and control with workers leads to increased effectiveness of an organizational citizenship behavior. Group-forming experiment reveals that workers empowerment goals play important roles in the creation and survival of groups. Study of management skills reveals that empowering inferiors is a major factor in the effectiveness of an organization and the management (Robbins, Crino and Friendendall., 2002). According to Ghorbani, Allilou, and Noubari (2012) empowerment is a term institutional arrangements in which, the autonomy freedom of action, and responsibility for the decision delegate to employees based on it. Some researchers consider participative management as, involving employees in decision making and maximizing their job's involvement in the organization (Ghorbani et al., 2012). Public sector today has been evolving and adopting different types of system in the pursuit of improvising the service delivery system to the customers and end-users. The adoption and application of KIK, KPI, MS-

ISO of different series, MQF and some other sub-systems in the organization have affected the attitude and behavior of the employees. When systems are in place, naturally human actions and behaviours will quite standardized and monitored closely in order not to breach any policies or procedures. Sometimes action can be so systematically determined and this might influence voluntary-based actions such as organizational citizenship behavior. This behavior can also emerge as a result of internal factors such as psychological empowerment as perceived by the employees. The introductions or adoptions of new system are commendable. However, the policy makers have to ensure that these new management practices will result in negative reactions or possibly negative impacts on the employee's behaviour. The failure of policy makers to explore the impact of new policies on human behavior will result in failure in the implementation of such policy. A very clear example of this will be the implementation of new innovations in the Malaysian Education system such as use of English in the teaching of Mathematics and Science (PPSMI) or the more recent program known as PBS (School Based Evaluation) used in the secondary schools. Changes that are being introduced must be cautiously put in place so as to minimize resistance among the executers especially the employees/staff. Therefore this study intends to see the perception of government staffs on their level of PE and OCB as a result of adopting new systems in the workplace.

II. Literature Review

Psychological Empowerment

Conger & Kanungo (1988) was initiated in the psychological approach when they described empowerment as a psychological state and more specifically a psychological enabling. They define it as "a process of enhancing feelings of self-efficacy among organizational members through the identification of conditions

that foster powerlessness and through their removal by both formal organizational practices and informal techniques of providing efficacy information. Conger and Kanungo (1988) pointed out that empowerment 'is a principle component of managerial and organizational effectiveness. As mentioned by, the empowerment process is one of eliminating the sense of inability or weakness of employee or members in organization and focusing to enhancing individual or employee efficiency beliefs. Besides, Thomas & Velthouse (1990), extended this approach by defining power as energy and then to empower means to energize, and it is related to "changes in cognitive variables (called task assessments) which determine motivation in workers". According to Spreitzer (1995), in the psychological approach, 'empowered' can be examined whether and to what extent an employee is empowered since the state of empowering is not a yes or no situation but, on the contrary, it is a "continuous variable" where "people can be viewed as more or less empowered, rather than empowered or not empowered". Then, Spreitzer (1995) refers Psychological Empowerment as intrinsic task motivation established in a set of four cognitions which is (1) *meaning*, (2) *competence*, (3) *self-determination* and (4) *impact*. As mentioned by Spreitzer (1995), meaning can be defined as "the value of a work goal or purpose, judged in relevant to an individual's own ideals or standards". Hackman and Oldham (1975), mentioned the term is similar with meaningfulness of the critical psychological states in the Job Diagnostic Survey. In other words, Thomas and Velthouse (1990) also refers that term to the "intrinsic caring about a given task". Spreitzer (1995), defined competence or self-efficacy as an individual's belief in his or her ability or fitness to perform work role activities with skill. According to Bandura (1977) in his evaluation in clinical psychological literature under the terms self-efficacy, people that experience low personal mastery avoid situations that require the relevant skills. Therefore, this avoidance leads them to prevent from confronting fears and developing competencies (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). By building a sense of self-efficacy, organizational members also build their expectancy beliefs that their efforts will produce the desired outcome (Bandura, 1986) which determines how much effort individuals will devote toward in-role performance and how long they will persist in the face of obstacles (Bandura, 1977). While viewing psychological empowerment as a kind to the unidimensional construct of self-efficacy was an important first step in theory building, subsequent research expanded on this perspective by suggesting a multidimensional perspective of psychological empowerment. Spreitzer (1995), defined self-determination as "an individual's sense of having choice in initiating and regulating actions. Self-determination involves autonomy in the initiation and continuation of behaviors and processes in the workplace including work methods, pace or effort (Spreitzer, 1995).

Spreitzer (1995) stated impact as "the degree to which an individual can influence strategic, administrative or operating outcomes at work". This means it refers to the "degree to which a behavior is seen as making a difference in terms of accomplishing the purpose of the task, that is, producing intended effects in one's task environment (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Impact seems, *prima facie*, similar to locus of control; yet, it is different because locus of control is a global personality characteristic whereas impact is influenced by the work context (Spreitzer, 1995).

Or ganizational Citizenship Behaviour

According Organ (1988), Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

(OCB) can be defined as employee activities that exceed the formal job requirements and contribute to effective functioning of the organization. Organ (1988) mentioned OCB as self-initiated by employees. Although this kind of behaviour can enhance the overall effectiveness of organizations functions, the formal organizational rewards system does not recognize the behaviour OCB can be considered to be an individual's voluntary work beyond the role assigned to him/her in the organization (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Turnipseed, 2009:201). Besides, Williams and Anderson (1991) stated that OCB refers to the proactive cooperation and assistance among co-workers. Then, Smith, Organ and Near (1983) define OCB as an behaviours which individuals exhibit voluntarily with the aim of helping others in the organization in addition to the official role of the individual in the organization. Therefore, OCB can be regarded as subset of pro-social organizational behaviour (Cetin et al., 2003:41). Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is also defined as individual behaviors that are discretionary and not rewarded directly by the organization (Organ, Podsakoff and MacKenzie, 2006; Turnipseed and Rassuli, 2005; Williams and Anderson, 1991). Organ (1988) classified OCB into following dimensions:

01. *Altruism*: taking the initiative to help members of an organization resolve problems;
02. *Conscientiousness*: in addition to complying with organizational rules, going beyond minimum requirements through hard work;
03. *Sportsmanship*: obeying organizational regulations, tolerating imperfect situations without complaint;
04. *Courtesy*: to avoid work problems, remind and inform other coworkers in advance;
05. *Civic virtue*: remaining attentive and proactive when participating in organizational activities.

Williams and Anderson (1991) categorized OCB into two dimensions: OCB of individuals (OCB-I) and OCB toward organizations (OCB-O). OCB-I refers to behaviours directed at specific individuals such as courtesy and altruism, while OCB-O refers to behaviours concerned with benefiting the organisation as a whole such as conscientiousness, sportsmanship, and civic virtue. Podsakoff et al. (1997) proposed three dimensions of assessment: helping behavior, sportsmanship, and civic virtue. Van Dyne and LePine (1998) categorized OCB into two dimensions: helping behavior and voice behavior. As mentioned before, Podsakoff et al. (2009) pointed out that, although many researchers use different evaluative dimensions, the two most common measurement methods were the five dimensions proposed by Organ. However, Hoffman et al. (2007) and LePine et al. (2002) have investigated the dimensionality of the OCB construct and have demonstrated the overall validity and robustness of Organ's classification. In studying OCB, researchers have primarily concentrated on its relationship with individual and organizational performance (Bolino et al., 2002). According to Cohen and Vigoda (2000), the positive effects of OCB for an organization include improved productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness and allocation of resources. Because of their orientation toward profitability and existence as social entities, organizations should generally promote citizenship behavior among their employees (Miao, 2011). In studying OCB, researchers have primarily concentrated on its relationship with individual and organizational performance (Bolino et al., 2002). According to Cohen and Vigoda (2000), the positive effects of OCB for an organization include improved

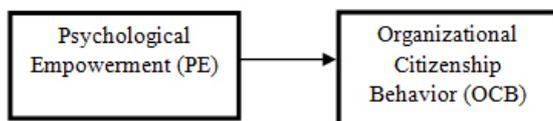
productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness and allocation of resources. Because of their orientation toward profitability and existence as social entities, organizations should generally promote citizenship behavior among their employees (Miao, 2011). In such cases OCB will play a vital role, as citizenship behavior is predicted by contextual habits, skill, and knowledge, each of which is in turn predicted by personality variables. These variables influence the employee's knowledge about what is required in a variety of work situations, skill in carrying out actions known to be effective, and patterns of response that either facilitate or hinder effective performance (Motowidlo et al., 1997).

The Relationship between Psychological Empowerment and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

Studies of psychological empowerment (PE) mostly consider the influence of organizational and work variables on psychological empowerment (Spreitzer et al., 1999; Algae et al., 2006). Employees who are psychologically empowered feel good about the tasks they are doing and perceive them to be meaningful and challenging. Thus, the chances of a psychologically empowered employee performing well and conforming to organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) are higher. Research suggests that empowerment appears when companies implement practices that distribute power, information, knowledge, and rewards throughout the organization (Lawler et al., 1992; Nezakati et al., 2010) and that psychological empowerment is related to job attitude. With respect to the service sector, there is a positive relationship between psychological empowerment and measures of OCB (Maharaj, 2005). Conger and Kanungo (1988) pointed out that PE is a type of internal motivation conducive to promoting OCB. Morrison (1996) proposed that empowerment of employees, increase their motivation, aspirations, and demonstration of organisational citizenship. Wat and Shaffer (2005) indicated that employees' psychological empowerment significantly influences OCB. Wat and Shaffer (2005), Chiang and Hsieh (2012) also indicated that PE positively affects OCB. Peccei and Rosenthal (2001) proposed that PE comprises work value and self-determination of work, therefore, when employees have more control and freedom in their work, they value their work and behave altruistically. Thus, discretion encourages employees to have a stronger OCB. Therefore, PE appears to be a proper construct for increasing employee motivation to demonstrate OCB. Also, an individual with a greater level of PE would be more suited to showing a higher commitment and consequently would engage in OCB. Liden et al. (2000) indicated providing employees with psychological empowerment for superior job performance is imperative (Liden et al., 2000; Spreitzer et al., 1997). Increasing OCB requires more psychological empowerment (Hwang, 2005; Maurer et al., 2002; Peccei and Rosenthal, 2001; Spector and Fox, 2002; Tsaur et al., 2004; Wat and Shaffer, 2005; Yen et al., 2004)

III. Research Methodology

Research Framework



This study was developed to examine the relationship between independent variable of psychological empowerment and dependent variable of organizational citizenship behavior among government employees in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. This study employed a quantitative cross sectional survey method and the unit of analysis is individual middle level administrator grade 41 to 54. The content of the developed questionnaire is based on theoretical research framework together with the respondents' personal information. The Likert-Type Scale is an ordered scale from which respondents choose one option that best aligns with their view. It is often used to measure respondents' attitudes by asking the extent to which they agree or disagree with a particular question or statement. In this research, a 5 Points Likert-Type Scale were used and it consisted of range from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). All the variables, psychological empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior, are explored as individual-level variables, because this study are more concern on how all the variables interact to influence their originations and not their emergence to the organizational level. The study emphasizes on all middle level administrators serving in government departments and agencies in Sabah. Therefore, the population for this study is middle level administrators of various service schemes in grade 41 to 54, classified as management and professional grade (JabatanPerkhidmatanAwam, 1991 & 2002), working in public sector in Sabah. Initially, middle level administrators are responsible to manage and coordinate the daily administration activities. The middle level administrators devote much of their working hour to directional and organizational functions. Factor analysis was performed to find out dimensions or components of a set of variables. Kim & Mueller (1978) explained that the observed variables can be assumed were linear combinations of certain unobservable factors. Additionally, some factors were supposed to be ordinary to other factors, while others were assumed to be unique. Consequently, the unique factors do not influence the covariance. Factor analysis can be used for several reasons, hence in this study factor analysis employed to examine the fundamental dimensions of Psychological empowerment (meaning, competence, self-determination and impact) and organizational citizenship behavior (altruism, courtesy, civic-virtue, sportsmanship and conscientiousness). This study also employed the correlation analysis to examine the relationship of each dimensions in both variables. Multiple regression was used as the means to explore the relationship of psychological empowerment towards organizational citizenship behavior.

IV. Data Analysis And Result

Profile of Respondent

This study includes the demographic profile of respondents which explain individuals variables have been analyzed to know the frequency and the percentage of each variable. Profile of respondent are based on gender, age of respondent, level of education, length of service, and position or scale of service are analyzed.

Table 1 : Summary Data Profile

| Variables | Categories | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| Gender | Male | 67.6 |
| | Female | 32.4 |
| Age | 20 to 29 years old | 11.0 |
| | 30-39 years old | 62.8 |
| | 40 to 49 years old | 20.0 |
| | 50 and above years old | 6.2 |
| Education Level | SPM | 0.7 |
| | STPM/Diploma | 9.0 |
| | Bachelor Degree | 75.9 |
| | Master | 14.5 |
| Length Of Service | 1 to 5 years | 31.7 |
| | 6 to 10 years | 40.0 |
| | 10 years above | 28.3 |
| Position and Scale Of service | 41 | 51.0 |
| | 42 | 5.5 |
| | 44 | 27.6 |
| | 45 | 3.4 |
| | 48 | 7.6 |
| | 50 | 0.7 |
| | 52 | 0.7 |
| 54 | 3.4 | |

Based on the table above, it shows that 67.6% from 145 respondents are male while 32.4% are female. 11.0% respondents age comes from those 20-29 years old, 62.8% are 30-39 years old, 20.0% are 40 to 49 years old and the balance of 6.2% come from the age group of 50 and above. Majority of the respondents' education level is Bachelor's Degree with 75.9%, 14.5% for Master Degree, 9.0% for STPM/Diploma, and the balance is 0.7% for SPM. 46 (31.7%) respondents have been workings for 5 years, 58 respondents (40.0%) from 5 to 10 years and the balance 41 (28.3%) of them have been working for more than 10 years. In form of respondents position and scale of service, majority is from grade 41 which is around 51.0%, 27.6% are grade 44 and the lowest grade is 50 and 52 which is only 0.7%.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation Analysis used in this study to assess the relationship of each independent variable (meaning, competence, self-determination and impact) one at a time, with the dependent variable (altruism, courtesy, civic-virtue, sportsmanship and conscientiousness) through the correlation coefficient; are the two variables linearly related? Based on the analysis, it is shown that each dimension on both variables have positive correlation between each other.

Table 2: Result of Bivariate Correlation Analysis

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|
| Meaning | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| Competence | 0.448 | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Self-determination | 0.434 | 0.391 | 1 | | | | | | |
| Impact | 0.193 | 0.315 | 0.24 | 1 | | | | | |
| Altruism | 0.313 | 0.302 | 0.363 | 0.293 | 1 | | | | |
| Courtesy | 0.143 | 0.237 | 0.13 | 0.160 | 0.397 | 1 | | | |
| Civic- Virtue | 0.14 | 0.335 | 0.194 | 0.095 | 0.279 | 0.096 | 1 | | |
| Sportsmanship | 0.042 | 0.122 | 0.035 | -0.08 | 0.202 | 0.161 | 0.038 | 1 | |
| Conscientiousness | 0.025 | 0.119 | 0.106 | 0.117 | 0.134 | 0.176 | 0.097 | 0.054 | 1 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression are an extension of bivariate correlation. In this analysis is assess the relationship between all of the independent variables with each other (obtain a correlation coefficient matrix for all the independent variable); are the independent variables too highly correlated with one another? To determine the answer for this question is how the analysis shows how much of the total variance in the effectiveness of organizational citizenship behavior variable is possible to explain by the independent variable (psychological empowerment).

Table 3: Multiple Regression for Psychological Empowerment and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

| Dependent Variable | Independent Variable | Beta (β) | t-value | sig. |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------|---------|-------|
| Organizational Citizenship Behaviour | | | | 0.000 |
| | Psychological Empowerment | 0.225** | 5.021 | 0.000 |

Model Summary table,
R2= 0.150
ANOVA Table,
F Value = 25.208
Sig F Change = .000

Note: Significant levels: *p < 0.05; t-value=1.645, **p<0.01; t-value=2.333

As shown in Table 3.0, the multiple regression result for psychological empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior found that the corresponding standardized regression coefficients for psychological empowerment is significant $\beta=0.225$, $p<0.01$, $t\text{-value} = 5.021$. Hence, hypothesis is supported. This test has shown that, there is a significant relationship between psychological empowerment and organizational citizenship behavior among employees.

V. Discussion and Sconclusion

In any organization, organization performance is very much associated with employees’ behaviour. Previous researchers have found that, organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) has a significant effect on employees’ commitment and performance. With today’s tremendous pressure put on organizations to improve their performance and competitiveness, OCB may be contributing in a form of employees effort and commitment towards overall organization high performance, thus the focus of this study is to explore and measure the level of psychological empowerment (PE) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) among government employees and how do they relate to each other. The target group for this study is the full-time employee in the public sectors around Kota Kinabalu. There are 10 public sectors departments and agencies that participated as respondent in this study. By testing the four dimensions of PE (meaning, competence, self-determination and impact) and five dimensions of OCB (altruism, courtesy, civic virtue, sportsmanship and conscientiousness), it is proven that, government employees in Kota Kinabalu perceived PE as a factors that contributed to their OCB. As according to Podsakoff et.al (2000), OCB have found to have an effects on organizational performance into seven areas: [1] to improve the efficiency of colleagues and managers; [2] release resources for more productive activities and objectives; [3] reduce the scarce resources needed for the maintenance of the normal operation of the organization; [4] assist in the coordination between work groups and groups within ; [5] strengthen the ability for the organization to attract and retain talented employees; [6] enhance the stability of the organization; and [7] make organizations more responsive to change in the environment. How does psychological empowerment (PE) related to OCB? This study has found that PE has significant effects on OCB where through the dimensions tested, it is proven that high PE will leads to positive OCB in return. Based on the

definition of PE, this study tested the perceived responsibility of employees towards job requirement that not entirely stated in their job description towards their personal choice on giving effort for some performance that not directly or explicitly instructed in the organization formal reward system.

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