



Coaching and employee organizational citizenship behaviours: The role of procedural justice climate

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 30 June 2016

Received in revised form 4 September 2016

Accepted 10 October 2016

Keywords:

Coaching behaviour

Procedural justice climate

Organizational citizenship behaviour

Multilevel analysis

Substitutes for leadership theory

ABSTRACT

This study investigates how the level of procedural justice climate (PJC) in a group may reduce or increase the impact of coaching behaviour of department managers on the organizational citizenship behaviours (OCBs) of their subordinates in the hospitality sector. The sample consists of 40 department managers and 176 employees of 12 five star hotels operating in Northern Cyprus. A multilevel analysis using hierarchical linear modelling (HLM) was utilized due to the nested nature of employees in their corresponding departments. Effective coaching is especially more important in departments where procedural justice climate is low. When the PJC is low, the role of effective coaching becomes imperative for OCBs of employees. In line with the substitutes for leadership theory, the higher levels of PJC serve as a substitute for coaching.

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1. Introduction

Although the concept of coaching has a long history in the sports domain, over the last few decades, it has gained special attention in private and public sector organizations as a very popular method of developing employee performance (Ellinger et al., 2011; Kim et al., 2014). The role of a manager has shifted from supervision and control to coaching which is considered a leadership initiative that focuses on developing employees in order to improve their performance (Huang and Hsieh, 2015). This role has become so widespread that the Learning and Development Survey by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), the professional body for HR and people development in the United Kingdom, reports that internal managerial coaching is used by three fourths of organizations and the importance of coaching is expected to increase in the near future (CIPD, 2015).

Although the relationship between coaching and employee behaviours have been examined in the literature (Ellinger et al., 2003; Huang and Hsieh, 2015; Krazmien and Berger, 1997; Sue-Chan et al., 2012), how the different contexts may influence this relationship has not been studied. As the situational leadership theory argues, leader behaviours may be effective in some situations but have no effects or even negative effects in others (Ling et al.,

2016; Podsakoff and MacKenzie, 1997). Investigating coaching behaviour without considering the differing conditions in which they occur may lead to erroneous conclusions and one size fits all recommendations. One such situational factor that influences the conditions in which coaching behaviours occur is Procedural Justice Climate (PJC). The work unit climate of procedural justice can transform how employee performance and citizenship behaviour is influenced by supervisor behaviours (Andrews et al., 2015) and by individual characteristics (Andrews et al., 2009). Recognizing that the influence of coaching may be quite different under different organizational circumstances, we explore how the changes in employee perception of procedural justice climate in work units may act as a contextual factor that results in different effects of coaching on employee citizenship behaviours.

The aim of the current study is to investigate how the OCBs of employees may be influenced by their managers' coaching behaviour differently according to employee perception of PJC. Thus, we investigate the moderating effect of PJC on the relationship between coaching behaviour of managers and OCBs of subordinates. Our multilevel approach enables us to account for the factors that act on the whole of the group at the unit level such as procedural justice climate. Simultaneously, it allows us to consider individual level variables such as employee perception of the coaching behaviour of their manager and the manager perception of employee citizenship behaviours.

In the next section we discuss our conceptual model (Fig. 1) in the light of related prior research and theories. We move on to stating our hypotheses, then explain our multilevel methodology

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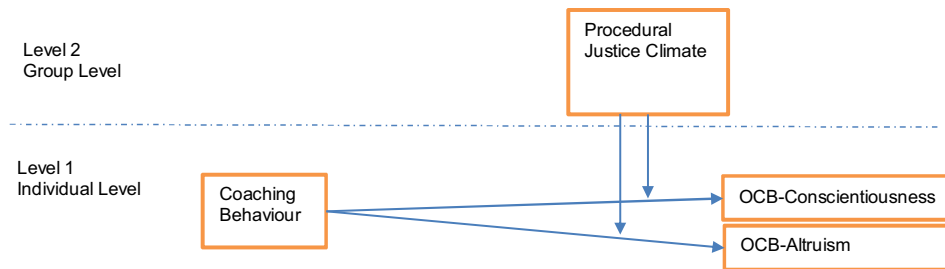


Fig. 1. Hypothesised Model of Coaching Behaviour of managers, Procedural Justice Climate and Organisational Citizenship Behaviours of subordinates.

and provide sample characteristics as well as information about our measurement scales. The findings follow the hypotheses testing and theoretical and managerial implications are provided. Our conclusion includes the implications of managing justice climate and coaching in hotels. Recommendations for further research are also provided.

2. Theory and hypotheses

Managerial coaching refers to the developmentally oriented managerial leadership behaviours that take the form of dyadic interactions emphasizing immediate task improvement and can be differentiated from mentoring which focuses more on long-term career support (Kim et al., 2014). Various researchers have provided definitions of coaching (Ellinger et al., 2003; Hamlin et al., 2008; Kim et al., 2014; Krazmien and Berger, 1997). Managerial coaching refers to the actions of a manager or leader who serves as a coach and facilitates learning in the workplace setting through specific behaviours that enable the employee to learn and develop (Ellinger, 2013). In a study of hotel managers, it was found that while managers acknowledged the importance of coaching for their industry and organizations, the responses also revealed that they were not effectively providing coaching in their organizations (Krazmien and Berger, 1997).

Organizational justice describes the perceptions of employees about the fairness of organization and the employees' resulting behavioural reactions (Greenberg, 1987; James, 1993). Three aspects of organizational justice have been examined in the current literature (Colquitt, 2001; DeConick, 2010): distributive justice, interactional justice and procedural justice. Distributive justice refers to the justice of decision outcomes. Interactional justice refers to the fairness of treatment of employees. Colquitt (2001) suggested that there are two components of interactional justice. One is interpersonal justice that relates to perceptions of employees about respect and dignity they receive. Other one is informational justice that refers to perceptions of employees about how sufficient, specific and truthful they found the explanations provided to them.

The procedural justice refers to the fairness of the process of decision making (Cropanzano and Greenberg, 1997; Greenberg and Colquitt, 2013). The fairness in allocating resources or resolving conflict needs to be consistent, without bias, based on accurate information, representative, correctable and ethical (Leventhal, 1980). Since employees in a workgroup operate under similar procedures, rules and processes and they share the same experiences, there will be a PJC that emerges based on shared perceptions of procedural fairness at the workgroup level (Sung et al., 2015).

Organizational citizenship behaviours refer to employee behaviours that facilitate organizational effectiveness but are not a formal job requirement and do not get rewarded by the formal reward system (Bateman and Organ, 1983). The OCB concept has been discussed as behaviour targeted towards co-workers,

managers, organization and customers (Wu et al., 2013). Literature shows that OCBs result in decreased absenteeism and lower employee turnover rates (Podsakoff et al., 2009), more effective groups (Ehrhart et al., 2006), and improved organizational effectiveness (Podsakoff et al., 1997).

Majority of the OCB research utilized the 5 dimensions of OCB identified by Organ (1988). These 5 dimensions are Altruism, Conscientiousness, Civic Virtue, Courtesy, and Sportsmanship. Altruism refers to the act of voluntarily helping co-workers in the organization in order to increase their performance and effectiveness. Helping co-workers who are new or those experiencing difficulties to use certain equipment, to complete their duties, to prepare a project on time are examples of altruistic behaviours.

Conscientiousness refers to the behaviours of going beyond the minimum job or role requirements. Sticking by the rules, regulations and procedures of the organization even when there is no surveillance can be examples for conscientiousness. Civic virtue dimension of OCB includes the activities of participation in organizational meetings. Civic virtue behaviours can be reading posted materials, participating in social activities and attending meetings. Courtesy indicates those behaviours which alert co-workers about changes and problems before these changes and problems affect their work. Courteous behaviours can be briefings, conveying information and reminders. Sportsmanship refers to employees working willingly, without complaining, and with a positive attitude even though they face difficulties and distressful situations. In this dimension of OCB, employees avoid conflicts and let the problems ride. We study two dimensions of OCB; Altruism (OCB-A) and Conscientiousness (OCB-C). Since there is a high level of interdependence among the roles in hospitality organizations (Van Dyne and LePine, 1998; Raub, 2008), altruistic behaviours (OCB-A) can be very valuable for the overall performance. Mistake or failure of a team member will have an adverse effect on the entire unit. Mutual support and cooperative behaviour among the employees can result in quality service delivery (Stamper and Van Dyne, 2001). Service standards are essential in service quality (Raub, 2008), therefore making conscientious behaviour (OCB-C) vital. Employees in hotels should not only follow the rules and regulations of the organization when they are being supervised but also must follow the service standards even when no co-worker or a supervisor is watching them. Some stringent service standards such as wearing the appropriate necessary uniforms at all times, following standard telephone etiquette, answering the telephone calls before the third ring, preparing the hotel room according to the standards, and serving the food order in the restaurant in a specified time are especially critical in the hospitality industry. These two dimensions are identified as the main elements of OCB (Organ, 1997) and the most frequently studied aspects of OCB (Ehrhart, 2004). Hence, the choice of these two aspects is accordant with the past literature on OCB and provides extra contribution of exploring these dimensions in hospitality industry.

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