

Using fuzzy DEMATEL in modeling the causal relationships of the antecedents of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in the hospitality industry: A case study in the Philippines

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 3 July 2017

Received in revised form

19 October 2017

Accepted 9 November 2017

Available online 23 November 2017

Keywords:

Organizational citizenship behavior

Antecedents

Fuzzy set theory

DEMATEL

Hospitality industry

ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to identify the antecedents of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in the hospitality industry and to determine their causal relationships. As a case study, experts with key positions in top hotels and restaurants in Cebu, Philippines were asked to identify the OCB antecedents they observe and experience in practice. Using fuzzy DEMATEL to understand the causal relationships with imprecise information, organizational commitment emerged as the most prominent antecedent with the highest number of impact, both given and received. Furthermore, human resource practices appeared as the most influential antecedent, which showed a higher degree of causality to the other antecedents. Finally, job satisfaction and employee engagement have the highest number of impacts received which means that they are more dependent on other antecedents in the list. These findings may serve as guidelines in making resource allocation decisions, employee performance evaluation and human resource strategy formulation, among others.

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1. Introduction

It is widely accepted that satisfied employees create satisfied customers, and ultimately improves the profitability of the firm. Case in point is the customer service practices of the Ritz-Carlton Hotels & Resorts, a member of the Marriott's Luxury division (Hargett, 2015). Ritz empowers its frontline employees to provide excellent service and to create a memorable experience for its guests not only by meeting expressed needs but also serving the unexpressed ones. Ritz empowers employees, and in return, employees make the extra effort to serve Ritz' customers excellently. Bateman and Organ (1983) call this organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), the extra-role employees perform in the workplace. Organ (1988; p. 4) then defined OCB as an "individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization". This definition provided the groundwork that led to the development of OCB as a field in organization studies and has become an essential topic of discussion for the past three decades.

One important finding that scholars became interested in OCB is its link toward productivity and increased efficiency. Kataria, Garg, and Rastogi (2013) pointed out that OCB has proven significance toward organizational effectiveness and this has put the field into the limelight. The pleasant experiences of the guests of Ritz-Carlton cannot be realized without employees demonstrating OCB, such as going beyond their formal duties (see George, 1991; Organ & Ryan, 1995; Pillai, Scandura, & Williams, 1999; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996, 2000; Williams & Anderson, 1991). This was later supported by Nielsen, Hrivnak, and Shaw (2009) who highlighted that OCB has a positive impact on the employee performance and consequently, organizational performance. Becton, Giles, and Schraeder (2008) demonstrated the potential advantages and disadvantages of incorporating OCB into the formal employee appraisal system and observed that more organizations are embracing the formal measuring and rewarding OCBs.

Due to the significance of OCB employee performance, especially in the services industry, current discussions of OCB studies have been extensively directed to the understanding of the antecedents of OCB and their overlaps with similar vital constructs (i.e., contextual performance, prosocial organizational behavior, and extra-role behavior). Previous studies were reported to shed light on the puzzling question: What makes an employee show OCB? Various attempts were presented in current literature; for instance, Kays

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(2001) and Yoon and Suh (2003) pointed out that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are some of the antecedents of OCB. Early works frequently consider attitudinal variables, personality traits, task characteristics and workplace-related elements as antecedents of OCB (George, 1991; Organ & Ryan, 1995; Pillai et al., 1999; Podsakoff et al., 1996, 2000; Williams & Anderson, 1991). Over time, as global organizational dynamics changes, a wide array of determinants has been identified. This has been made possible through recent investigations of OCB with other emerging concepts and disciplines. Known antecedents of OCB in current literature include job satisfaction (González & Garazo, 2006; Schleicher, Watt, & Greguras, 2004; Yee, Yeung, & Cheng, 2008), employee engagement and job embeddedness (Ahmed, Rasheed, & Jehanzeb, 2012), organizational commitment (Gautam, Van Dick, Wagner, Upadhyay, & Davis, 2005), high-performance human resource practices (Mukhtar, Sial, Imran, & Jilani, 2012), self-efficacy (Dominguez, Enache, Sallan, & Simo, 2013), transformational leadership (Vega-Vazquez, Cossio, & Martin-Ruiz, 2012), self-serving motives (Bolino & Klotz, 2015) and culture (Paine & Organ, 2000).

While it is believed that differences in culture or traditions among countries may lead to differences in OCB—individually or collectively, current literature failed to directly point out the similarities and differences of the antecedents in both the context of Western and Eastern cultures. Paine and Organ (2000) argued that culture plays an essential role in employees' desire and willingness to engage in OCB; yet there is a missing work in explaining the nature of OCB based on cultural context (Becton & Field, 2009). Ma, Qu, and Wilson (2016) recognized these differences of the impact of OCB toward an organization in Eastern and Western cultures and hypothesized that these differences are associated with differences in values and norms. For instance, the difference between Western (e.g., American) and Eastern (e.g., Philippines) cultures can be explored using the 6-dimension model of Hofstede (2017) as shown in Fig. 1. The differences across cultures of nations as portrayed in the 6-dimension model have been thoroughly discussed by Hofstede (2001). A score of 94 in the power distance index (PDI) suggests the Filipinos, in general, accept the reality that individuals in the society are not equal, unlike the Americans. Another dimension worth mentioning is the individualism index. Filipinos have a low individualism index compared to the Americans, which suggests that the Philippines is a collectivistic society, in which the people value relationships and loyalty. Moreover, important findings generated by Moorman and Blakely (1995) suggest that if an

individual holds collectivistic values or norms, the likelihood to perform citizenship behaviors is high. This elicitation of collectivism as a norm is prevalent in Eastern countries. However, this notion has not gained enough attention in the current literature as Western nations became the case studies of empirical reports on OCB antecedents research.

Aside from the lack of understanding of OCB studies in Eastern countries which include identifying of OCB antecedents in the first place, current literature merely identifies the antecedents without due exploration of its dynamics and interrelationships. The lack of understanding of the interrelationships of OCB antecedents may provide a myopic view on the real causes of OCB. While identified antecedents in literature were already established with some empirical support, it is worth noting that some, if not all, of these antecedents, may influence other antecedents due to their loosely defined boundaries and overlaps. For instance, higher organizational commitment causes higher employee engagement since employees who are dedicated or loyal to the organization tend to actively participate and get involved in advancing the interest of the organization. It will definitely help managers in better understanding the complexities of these vague constructs if all these interrelationships are determined (i.e., identify the antecedents that have higher tendencies to impact other antecedents). This knowledge would help managers make better decisions for organizational policy-making, development of human resource programs, incentive and reward schemes, resource allocation and medium to long-term planning.

It is also plausible to note that, due to the cultural background differences among countries and the socioeconomic environment, these interrelationships are highly homogeneous to organizations with similar industrial make-ups. For instance, since employees in the service industry tend to have more customer related encounters compared to their manufacturing counterparts, showing OCB in the service industry is more visible and tangible. Thus, it is argued that employees in the service industry are prone to show OCB and to a certain degree required to exhibit some form of OCB.

With these gaps in the current literature, this paper intends to achieve two objectives: (1) to identify OCB antecedents in a developing Asian country, and (2) to model the causal relationships of these antecedents, both in a particular industry. A case study in the Philippine hospitality industry is carried out in this work. Service industry, where hospitality industry belongs, is growing steadily since the mid-20th century. In other progressive Asian countries, the service industry contributes more than three-fifths or 60% of the countries' gross domestic product (GDP) (Park & Shin, 2012). In the Philippines, the service industry contributed to the country's GDP 56.7% in 2014 and 58.8% in 2015 (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, 2015). The tourism industry, an important benefactor sector of the hospitality industry, has an estimated 15% share of global GDP in 2008 and has created approximately 250 million jobs worldwide (Lagman, 2008). Its contribution to the Philippine gross national product (GNP) is 8.8%, and the industry is considered as a key element for the Philippine economic development (Lagman, 2008). Particularly, this current case study is situated in Cebu City as one of the most industrialized cities in the Philippines outside the National Capital Region, and which is currently transforming itself into a tourism and business hub. Cebu, a province in the central Philippines, has one of the largest tourism investments in the country (Tourism Investment Portfolio, 2008) and recent statistics showed that Cebu has an approximate 20% share of the country's total visitor arrivals in February 2017 (Tourism Statistics, 2017). Aside from the limited OCB studies in the Philippines and Cebu in general, these figures demonstrate the importance of identifying OCB antecedents to support the growth of hospitality industry in the locality as well as understanding the complex causal relationships of

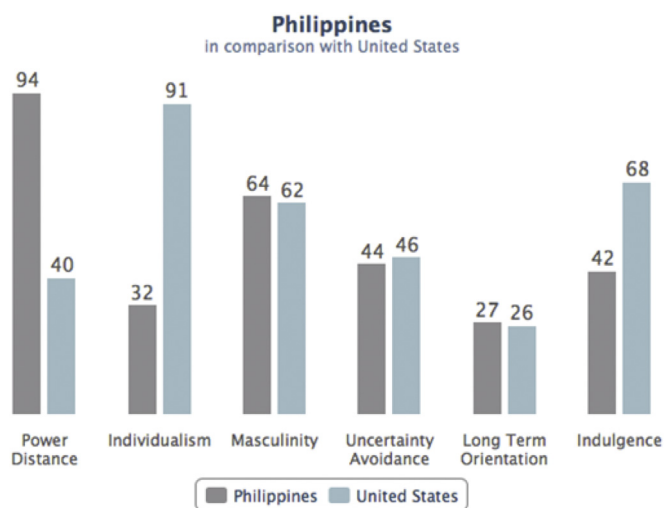


Fig. 1. Philippine culture in comparison with the United States using the 6-Dimension Model of Hofstede (Hofstede, 2017).

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