

The Dimensionality of Organizational Justice and Its Relationship with Organizational Citizenship Behavior in the Malaysian Context

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Abstract: This conceptual paper provides insight into the relationship between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behavior. This paper proposed to include the new dimensions of organizational justice, which are Temporal Justice and Spatial Justice to examine their effects on the employees' behavior. Employees' perception on organizations' justice affects their behavior utmost, however, organizational justice has received limited attention in literature. Therefore, this conceptual paper discusses the concepts and previous studies that relate to the above issues. Recommendations for future research is suggested.

Keywords: Organizational Justice, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Conceptual Paper

1.0 Introduction

Many organizations have been looking for approaches to reduce costs in all areas without delaying the performance and efficiency of organizations due to efficiency is crucial in all organizations [1]. Organizational citizenship behavior is known as one of the significant contributors to the organizations' productivity and efficiency [2]. According to [3], an employee that exhibits organizational citizenship behavior will contribute to the success of organization, has higher level of satisfaction in job [4], as well as creates a working environment which is helpful, caring, and healthy that improve the success of organization [5]. In the field of management, the employees who have voluntary action that are not designed in formal reward system is known as the employees who engaged in organizational citizenship behavior, which will improve the overall performance [6]. From this statement, it suggests that the employees work beyond the official job scopes to assist the efficiency of their organization.

One of the critical factors that can affect the level of organizational citizenship behavior is the perception of employees towards the justice at their workplace [7]. The growing trend of employment contracts in working place has triggered the attention of management field to the issue of fairness, justice, and ethics [8]. It is argued that, it is vital for researchers to study employees' perception on whether they have been treated fairly because the perception may influence the working outcomes and behavior [9]. Several scholars claimed that, as compared to other attitudinal variables that affect organizational citizenship behavior, organizational justice is known as a good predictor variable to organizational citizenship behavior [10-11]. In other words, if the employees perceived injustice in an organization, they will be less likely to exhibit organizational citizenship behavior, thus reducing the efficiency of the company.

Although organizational justice is helpful in motivating the employees to display organizational citizenship behavior, there are limited studies in Malaysia context, especially in manufacturing sector [12-13]. It is supported that, literature of organizational justice is lacking some aspects of organizational justice due to its complex phenomenon [14]. It is argued that, most of the past studies only focused on two or three dimensions of organizational justice, which are distributive justice, procedural justice, and interaction justice, past studies have neglected other forms of organizational justice [13]. According to [14], two new dimensions had been developed, namely temporal justice and spatial justice. Little attention was given to the new dimensions which might affect the behavior of the employees [14]. Scholars had raised the issue and they need future researchers to provide empirical evidences about the new dimensions of organizational justice [13].

2.0 Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Organizational citizenship behavior is known as the employees' behavior which is not restricted, not being recognized by the formal reward system explicitly, and improve the effectiveness of organization as a whole [15]. In later time, the earlier definition was improved, where organizational citizenship behavior is defined as the employees' behavior that supports the environment of organization in terms of social and psychology [16]. A further

definition was later set by [17], where organizational citizenship behavior is defined as the behavior of employees that is beyond the formal responsibilities, such as helping co-workers, and taking care of organization's property. It is concerned that organizational citizenship behavior should be the behavior that maintaining and developing the relationship among employees, and indirectly improving their job performance [18]. It is emphasized that, organizational citizenship behavior should be in the form of voluntary, instead of being recognized by the official reward system in organization [19].

Organizational citizenship behavior is recognized as a unique and important aspect of the employees' activities that influence the satisfaction of employees and the outcomes of organization [20]. It is believed that an employee with organizational citizenship behavior will receive better appraisal in performance, behave better than others, and being allocated more rewards [19]. It is also supported that organizational citizenship behavior can affect the overall organizational performance and effectiveness [20]. While, [21] mentioned about the stakeholders. They explained that organizational citizenship behavior is about the willingness of employees to act beyond their formal responsibilities in order to satisfy the stakeholders of company. This statement is supported by another scholar that they believed an employees with organizational citizenship behavior will obtain stakeholders' satisfaction, increased productivity, and reduced unnecessary costs in company [22].

Organizational citizenship behavior had been divided into two categories, which are OCBi (individual) and OCBo (organization) [23]. This is because [23] found that there are employees exhibiting organizational citizenship behavior towards the organization, where some exhibited organizational citizenship behavior to individual, such as supervisor, managers, or co-workers. It is argued that, researcher should examine organizational citizenship behavior by dividing it into these two categories, in order to investigate which category the employees are prone to exhibit [24]. If an employee prone to exhibit OCBi to the manager, the employee will be more valued by the manager. This statement is supported by [25], where they explained that the employees who exhibit OCBi are more valued by the manager because they can reduce the manager's burden in solving behavioral issues in the organization.

2.1 Organizational Justice

Organizational justice is known as one of the critical factors that can influence the behavior of the employees. Organizational justice is defined as the perception of the employees to the fairness of treatment in an organization perceptions [26]. It is claimed that, the employees are tend to behave positively when they perceived fairness in organization [27]. In another word, if the employees perceived unfairness in an organization, the employees are tend to reduce their positive behavior during working hours. The need of research to explore organizational justice is increasing because organizational justice is known as one of the main factors in comprehending the behaviors and attitude of the employees in the organizations [28]. Organizational justice concerns about how the employees perceive fairness to job-related problems [29].

When a researcher is examining the employees' perception on fairness in workplace, it can be said that the researcher is examining organizational justice [30]. It is known as one of the crucial factors that can affect the triumph of organization and it should be a fundamental value for an organization [31]. Organizational justice was first founded through Adams's Equity Theory, where it believes that the employees' perceptions on fairness are derived when the employees compare themselves with their colleagues based on their effort and result [32]. It is claimed that, the behavior of employees will be influenced by their perceptions that the distribution of rewards should be equal among the employees in the organization, while the result should be proportionate to their inputs [32]. In Adams's Equity Theory, he believes that, if an employee does not perceive equity in organization, the employee will reduce their input or effort. In another word, in the Equity Theory, the employees' input and results are the main components.

To examine organizational justice, the dimensions of organizational justice has been changing from one decade to another. Organizational justice was started with two dimensions in 70s, which were reactive and pro-active [33]. Followed by three dimensions in 80s, which are distributive, procedural, and interactional. Till 90s, four dimensions are developed, which are distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational. Later, the latest scholar had developed another two new dimensions to extend the concept of organizational justice, which are temporal and spatial justice [14].

2.2 Linkage between Organizational Justice and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Past researches have been highlighting the importance of organizational justice due to it is one of the key factors that influences the employees' behaviour and attitude in one organization [34]. In other words, if an organization wants to improve the employees' behaviour, the management should give attention in organizational justice. This is supported by another scholar that, organizational justice is able to influence organizational citizenship behaviour [35]. They revealed that organizational justice has significant positive link to organizational

citizenship behaviour. In another word, when organizational justice increased, the more the employees will exhibit organizational citizenship behaviour. To increase the probability of practicing organizational citizenship behaviour, it is seemed that the management should focus on the organizational justice.

Findings on the link between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behaviour might be different due to issues related to different types of organizational justice. For instance, [36] measured organizational justice in the term of “procedural justice” and “distributive justice” only. They revealed there is no significant link between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behaviour. However, in contradictory, [37] used “procedural justice” only as term of organizational justice. The scholar discovered that there is high linkage between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behaviour. From these, it can be suggested that, the using of different dimensions might affect the findings of the link between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behaviour.

Although there are researchers who widely agreed on the positive link between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behaviour, there are still limited empirical studies that confirm this positive link. It is revealed that there was negative relationship between organizational justice and dimension of organizational citizenship behaviour [38]. They found that Sportsmanship is negatively influenced by organizational justice. While, it is found out contrast result that, there is significant link between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behaviour [39]. This can be seemed that justice in organization plays important role in the employees’ organizational citizenship behaviour by providing fairness to the employees.

Overall, the impact of organizational justice on organizational citizenship behaviour is remained ambiguous in past studies. There are inconsistent findings in the link of organizational justice and organizational citizenship behaviour. It is mentioned that different national culture might have different effect of organizational justice towards organizational citizenship behaviour [40].

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Based on the literature review above, organizational justice is expected to have linkage with organizational citizenship behaviour, thus figure below has illustrated the conceptual framework of this study, together with the specific dimensions of each variable.

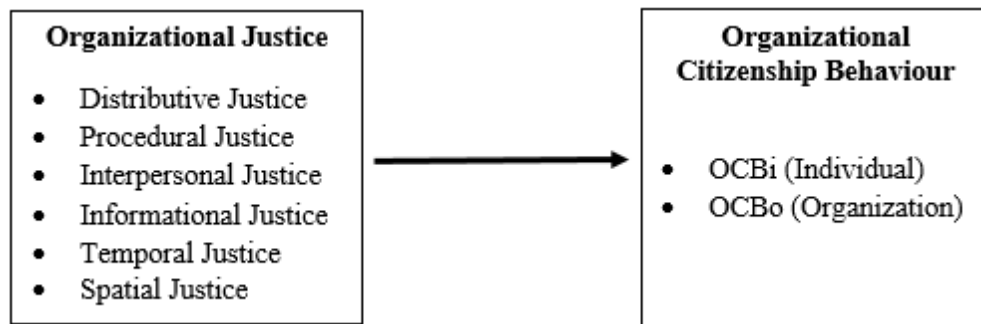


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3.0 Methodology

This section discusses the method that was used to conduct the literature review of this paper. We adopted a three-step process to look for articles that are relevant to our literature review. Firstly, we conducted a comprehensive search at journal databases such as Elsevier and Scopus using specific terms adapted from previous studies. The specific terms included organizational justice, along with its dimensions that we were looking for, such as distributive justice, temporal justice, spatial justice, procedural justice, informational justice, and interpersonal justice. Another term that was included in this study is organizational citizenship behavior, together with its dimensions, such as OCBi (individual) and OCBo (organization). Secondly, we collected the articles that are itemized on the Reference list of past studies. Followed by the third step, we have manually searched all the journal articles that were included in the Reference list of past studies. Since we targeted on recent studies, we searched for the past studies from the year of 2010 to the year of 2016. In order to prevent duplication of data, we do not use overlapping data in our literature review.

There are five exclusions that we concerned when we did the searching of articles. The first exclusion is we excluded those studies which are not empirical. Second, we excluded the studies which were conducted on students sample or educational settings because the linkage between the proposed variables will be conducted on

corporate personnel. It is argued that collecting data from students is significantly different from corporate personnel. Thus, the result of study might not be accurate. Third, we excluded the topics which are not relevant to our variables. Although there are variables similar with our variables, such as counterproductive behavior, we excluded the topics because it is not relevant to our topic. Fourth, we excluded the studies which their variable of organizational citizenship behavior was rated by co-worker or superior. This is because we focus on self-rated organizational citizenship behavior. Different sources of raters might have different result. Fifth, we exclude those studies which did not report the reliability and validity of their instruments due to it might affect the validity of the studies' result. By adopting the methods and exclusions as mentioned above, the linkage between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behavior is expected to be existing, thus the conceptual framework is developed in Figure 1.

A total of 700 population will be involved in this quantitative study, where they are the employees of four randomly selected manufacturing companies in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. In order to ensure that ample number of samples to represent the manufacturing companies, the researcher will use proportionate stratified random sampling method. Thirty percent is the minimum percentage that is able to represent the population [41]. Thus, in order to obtain sufficient sample number, the researcher will use fifty percent ($700 \times 50\% = 350$) for the plant to represent the population. In other words, the amount of sample will be 350 for this study. After determining the percentage, sample selection for the employees of each organization will be done using simple random sampling method, where the employees will be randomly selected to answer the questionnaire. The randomized sampling frame will be done using online software of randomizer. After collecting the data, the data will be analyzed by using the SmartPLS version 3.0. Questionnaire will be used as the instrument of this study and its reliability as well as validity will be tested through pilot test.

4.0 Conclusion

Through the literature review, understanding onto the linkage between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behavior is enhanced. This study might help to reduce the gaps as mentioned so that comprehensive understanding can be provided to both academic world and manufacturing context in Malaysia after the real study to be conducted. For future research, due to the scarcity of studies regarding the new dimensions of organizational justice [14], more empirical studies are needed to test the linkage between the proposed variables by including the new dimensions of organizational justice, namely Temporal Justice and Spatial Justice, to obtain more empirical evidences, especially in Malaysia manufacturing sector.

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