

## PROVIDING A CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR SURVEYING THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT ON ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR (OCB) IN ALBORZ INSURANCE COMPANY

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**ABSTRACT:** Employees' empowerment is undoubtedly an appropriate ability that the managers must focus on it in order to solve their problems and also attain their organizational goals. In the current world, the problems of the organizations are not predictable, and managers who attempt to empower their personnel can be hopeful to manage the challenges and get over the problems. On the other hand, there are some kinds of voluntary behaviors that have not included in the employees' job descriptions, and the employees emerge such behaviors only when their organization's success is their objective too. These behaviors are called Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) and we believe that Employees' Empowerment has a positive effect on the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). This study aims to provide a conceptual model which reveals the association between the Employees' Empowerment and the Organizational Citizenship behavior (OCB) based upon the previous managerial studies. We predict that the result of testing the conceptual model in Alborz Insurance Company will have a positive result, because the aforesaid company is a pioneer in servicing to their customers and relies to Empowerment and OCB as two important factors in attaining the organizational goals.

**Keywords:** Empowerment, Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), Conceptual Model

### INTRODUCTION

Nowadays we live in a variable world that not only the environment is changing, but also the customers' needs and wants are changing too. In this situation, only the enterprises which focus on intangible capabilities such as knowledge, talent, empowerment, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), etc. will succeed. The reason is that the human capitals are the most important assets of an organization and if the managers try to promote the employees' capabilities, the organizational goals will be attained. Changing in the customers' requirements may persuade the managers to notice to the employees and their promotion in order to utilize their abilities in critical situations and this will be practical only via empowerment.

Another facilitator for attaining the organizational goal is the employees' motivation. If the managers motivate their employees, they will emerge some voluntary behaviors; and these kinds of behaviors will enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity of the organization.

Based upon a 1988 study by Organ, the individual and voluntary behaviors which no reward has been formally determined for them are called Organizational Citizenship behavior (OCB). In addition, Whetten and Cameron (1998) believe that the Organizational Citizenship behavior (OCB) are voluntary and they may occasionally originate from a manager's initiative by utilizing an appropriate strategy which facilitates the employees'

empowerment and accelerates their internal motivation to boost their self-confidence and get over their negative feelings. Moreover, Organ (1988) adds that the empowered personnel who emerge the Organizational Citizenship behaviors are the crucial factor for success of the current enterprises so that they act as organizational soldiers for their corporations.

Providing a conceptual model which can specify the relation between Empowerment and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) from one hand and the association between their components from other is the major aim of the current study.

### EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT

According to Cooney (2004) and Lashley (1999), the important role of empowerment in organizational development has attracted widespread attention from researchers since the 1980s. In addition, based upon Gagne & Deci (2005) and Thomas & Velthouse (1990), empowerment is an important means which can motivate employees. Also, Shelton (1991), Brown (1992), Von Dran (1996), and Appelbaum and Honegger (1998) believe that the advantages of empowerment is increased productivity, higher quality products and services, improved teamwork and customer service, increased speed and responsiveness.

Based on Vogt (1997), empowerment is often defined as the act of giving people the opportunity to make workplace decisions by

expanding their autonomy in decision making. In addition, according to Blanchard (1997), empowerment has been described as the breaking down of traditional hierarchical structures. Also, Wall et al. (2004) believe that empowerment gives employees the authority to make decisions about customer service. They add that in industrial and organizational psychology and management, empowerment is the enhancement of the autonomy of employees in their work or increased involvement that results in increased decision making more generally within the wider agenda and interests of the organization.

Geroy et al. (1998) have an emphasize on the organizational aspect of empowerment, naming it the process of providing employees with the required guidance and skills to enable autonomous decision making (including accountability and responsibility for making these decisions within acceptable parameters) that is part of an organizational culture. In addition, according to Locke and Schweiger (1979) and Kirkman and Rosen (1999), empowerment causes commitment to the organization. Moreover, based on Keller and Dansereau (1995), empowerment receives wide recognition as an important subject in management practices, because personnel empowerment is one of the fundamental elements of managerial and organizational effectiveness.

According to Donovan (1994) and Townsend & Gebhardt (1997), employee empowerment is one of the newer techniques utilized by organizations which has been receiving accelerated attention from scholars and practitioners alike. Furthermore, Kinlaw (1995) believes that the most noticeable origins of empowerment comes from Douglas McGregor. According to Hancer & George (2003), McGregor's "Theory Y" approach was based on a belief that employee motivation, productivity, and participation can be sustained by designing jobs that are motivation intensive; meanwhile; McGregor emphasizes that management by direction does not work for every organization, because the typical devices of control, rewards, incentives, and assurances no longer continue to exist in the mind of workers.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR**

In a 1999 study by Brightman and Moran, the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) has been defined as a continuous and voluntary commitment to the goals, approaches, and subsequently the success of the

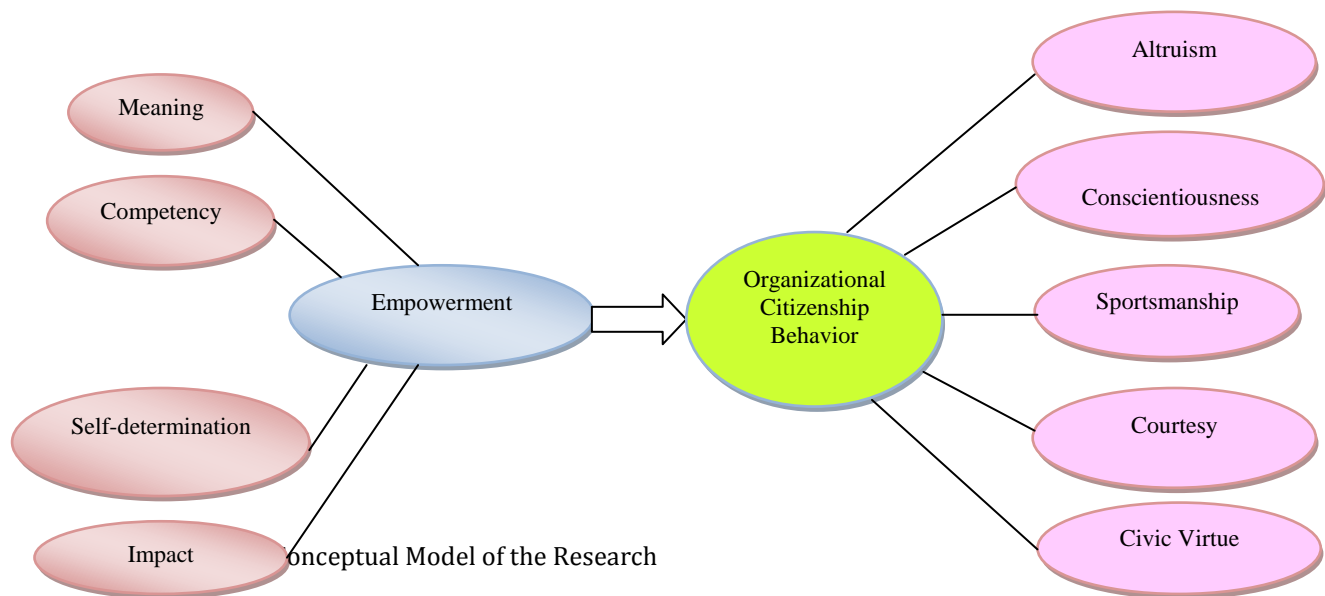
organization. They also believe that an organization will be successful if its foundation is reinforced based on the involvement of its employees and their best practices. Also, in a general definition, Organ declares that the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is a set of individual and voluntary behaviors which have not been directly designed by the formal systems of rewarding in the organization, but they promote the efficiency and effectiveness of organization's performance (Appelbaum et al., 2004).

According to Finkelstein and Penner (2004), the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is a kind of work activities which are surplus to the job requirements and help the effective performance of the organization. They believe that the OCB may be declared as Pro Social Organizational Behavior. Moreover, Chiu and Chen (2005) have defined the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) as a behavior beyond the job roles so that they are not directly and obviously recognized by the formal rewarding systems, but generally promote the effective performance of the organization. Furthermore, Korkmaz and Arpaci (2009) have defined the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) as a set of voluntary and intentional behaviors which are not parts of individual and formal tasks, but enhance the effective performance of the organization.

Organ (1998) and Netemeyer (1997) have classified the components of the Organizational Citizenship Behavior as Altruism, Conscientiousness, Sportsmanship, Courtesy, and Civic Virtue. In addition, Podsakoff et al. (2000) have recognized thirty types of the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) and have categorized them into the seven types that are: Helping Behaviors, Sportsmanship, Organizational Loyalty, Organizational Obedience, Individual Initiative, Civic Virtue, and Personal Development. Moreover, Fareh et al. (2004) have defined the eight components for the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB): Altruism, Accountability, Sportsmanship, Courtesy, Civic Virtue, Task Participation, Defensive Participation, and Organizational Loyalty

## **CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF THE RESEARCH**

Based on the four dimensions defined for empowerment by Spreitzer (1995) and Thomas & Velthouse (1990) and also five components specified for the OCB by Organ (1998), the conceptual model of the research may be presented as shown in Figure 1.



### CONCLUSION

Some researches on the Empowerment and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) have been tabulated as shown in Table 1. Therefore, one can conclude that there is a positive relation between the Empowerment

and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). On the other hand, Alborz Insurance Company is a well-known company servicing in the field of insurance throughout the country and if the conceptual model is tested in the afore-mentioned company, the result is predicted to be positive and significant.

Table 1 – A summary of some researches on Empowerment and the OCB

No.	Researcher (s)	Year	Variables	Result(s)
1	Bogler & Somech	2004	Empowerment, Organizational Commitment, Occupational Commitment, and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)	Positive relation between the Empowerment and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)
2	Ackfeldt & Coote	2005	the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)	Positive relation between the Empowerment and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)
3	Bhatnagar & Sandhu	2005	Empowerment and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)	Strong relation between the Psychological Empowerment and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)
4	Wat & Shaffer	2005	Empowerment, Employee Psychology, Staff Relations, Banking and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)	The direct impact of trust in supervision and psychological empowerment on all the components of the

				Organizational Citizenship behavior (OCB)
5	Premasagunnism	2009	Personal Factors and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)	Positive and significant relation between the Organizational Citizenship behavior (OCB) and Employees' Empowerment with their job performance
6	Katarangi	2010	Competences, Empowerment, and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)	No significant relation between the staff competencies and their Empowerment with the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)
7	Jiang et al.	2011	Psychological Empowerment, Relational Empowerment, and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)	The impact of Empowerment on Job Satisfaction and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)
8	Jiang & Fu	2011	Organizational Culture, Psychological Environment, and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)	The impact of Organizational Culture and Psychological Empowerment on the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)
9	Jin-Liang & Hai-Zhen	2012	Psychological Empowerment, Job Satisfaction, and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)	Significant impact of Psychological Empowerment on Job Satisfaction and the Organizational Citizenship behavior (OCB)
10	Chiang & Hsieh	2012	Hotel Staff, Perceived Organizational Support, Psychological Empowerment, Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), and Job Performance	The positive impact of Perceived Organizational Support and Psychological Empowerment on the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)
11	Dijke	2012	Justice, Procedural Justice, Fairness, Empowerment, Empowered Leader, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)	The promotion of the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) via Procedural Justice and Empowered Leadership
12	Garg & Suri	2013	Altruism, Civic Virtue, Conscientious, Job Design,	The impact of all parameters of the

			Supervision Nature, Psychological Empowerment, and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior	Psychological Empowerment on the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)
13	Abdalla et al.	2013	The Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), Training Personnel, Behaviors, and Nursing	Positive relation between Empowerment and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)
14	Aksel	2013	The Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), Psychological Empowerment, Teachers, and Training	Positive relation between Empowerment and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)
15	Karavardar	2014	Perceived Social Support, Psychological Empowerment, the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), and Job Performance	Positive relation between Empowerment and the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

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