Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Changing Employees into Citizens

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Abstract

"No employee in any organization is indispensable, every employee's efforts to become indispensable brings foreword the citizenship". In today's competitive world the biggest challenge faced by the leaders is managing and motivating people in an organization. People are the key drivers of the business and no business leader can ignore this fact. The organizations are operating in ever changing and volatile environment. Therefore, changes in organizational environments and their consequential advancements and flexibility are emphasized, which necessarily calls for deliberate but voluntary change in the behavior from members of an organization. Accordingly, an organization should be proficient of changing the attitudes and behaviors of their members so they can pursue their own desires, morals, inclinations and ambitions vicariously on a community basis. One solution to obtain the above situation is Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). This paper tries to create an insight into what is OCB, how it can be inculcated in an organization and the consequences of exploiting it.

Keywords

Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Environment, Attitudes, Leader

I. Introduction

Organizational Citizenship Behavior has been defined by Organ (1988, p. 4) as "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". (OCBs) are a special type of work behaviors defined as individual behaviors that are beneficial to the organization and are optional, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system. These behaviors arise due to intrinsic factors and the absences of such behaviours are generally not understood as punishable [9]. OCBs are more like psychological contracts and play very important role in enhancing the general health and well being of the organization thereby creating an impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of work teams and organizations. Why are we talking about citizenship in organizational context? Essentially citizenship is usually considered in terms of a country, but if we relate both there are certain similarities that can be considered to answer this question [6]. Both are driven by a leader with a certain set of values and distinct goals in mind, i.e. the culture, working for the development of its citizens. In addition to providing specific rights to the citizens, they motivate the citizens to contribute to their duties. In the same way the organization is driven by a strong leadership and distinct values one can help every individual to understand his or her roles importance in the organization and by fulfilling the basic rights of freedom of work it can drive them to go beyond their call of duty by making them the citizens of the company. Having a large army of employees in the company is not an enormous thing and not enough, what matters is how many citizens have been grown and nurtured in the organization. It's a proven fact that any citizen of the company would perform far better than any employee.

Every citizen would take decisions which are aligned with the company's business objectives. Citizens are generally known to put their personal goals subordinate to organizational goals .The strategy and execution would work hand-in-hand delivering higher productivity, and increased business revenues.

II. Type of Organizational Citizenship Behavior

A. Altruism
Selflessness is a concern for the welfare of others [4].

B. Courtesy
Showing of politeness in ones attitudes and behavior towards others.

C. Civic Virtue
It is a moral virtue of righteous behavior that can be claimed to be important for the benefit of the society [2].

D. Conscientiousness
It is the virtue of being painstaking and perfectionist. It includes virtues like self-discipline, carefulness, thoroughness, organization, deliberation, and need for achievement [4].

E. Sportsmanship
Spirit of being positive and competitive. It involves competing with the situation and not with the people [4].

Fig. 1: Types of Organizational Citizenship Behavior

III. Categories of Organizational citizenship behavior

A. Intrinsic Citizenship Behavior
Such behavioral occurrences are due to Intrinsic factors like high understanding of the organization and personal belief in the culture of the organization. The urge to get long term profits for any individual impels them to help as well as add in the organizational results. This forces the development of citizenship amongst them and peers to achieve long term goals and bring in long term discipline. The benefits of this behavior can only be reaped if all employees turn into citizens and work together for a common goal. The individuals need to communicate the same within a smaller group and hence find endorsers to promote the same [7]. As an organization starts seeing the benefits of this behavior, promotes the cause and

hence motivates the individual and the organization on a whole. This is the time when the individuals make their importance felt and hence create a higher brand value for themselves in the organization and become indispensable.

B. Extrinsic Citizenship Behavior

In this kind of behavior, motivation does not come voluntarily but the management trys to inculcate and instill an additional responsibility where in they counsel the employees and create awareness about the benefits and need of becoming citizens. The extrinsic motivation can only be created if the employees are educated about the benefits of aligning their personal goals with the organizational long term goals. To find a leader to promote this behavior requires a strong sense of understanding and a well crafted message.

IV. Ways of Increasing the Number of Citizens in the Organization

A. Leader Spending Time with Citizens

Every leader should spend time with its citizens to communicate the business goals of the organization and also to understand and receive their feedbacks. It gives independence and confidence to the individuals to take creative decisions, keeping in mind the business goals, it also makes it possible for the employees to keep in continuous touch with their seniors and keep a check whether or not they are in alignment with the business objectives.

B. Citizens Spending Time to see the Bigger Picture

Every citizen should have role clarity and should be able to decipher his or her own act in contributing to the organization, rather than just focusing upon the role described in the job profile .All individuals should have a holistic view of the basic elements and try to find out ways to improve and enhance productivity. Learning is a lifelong process, to emerge as a successful citizen there should be a focus on contributing to the company and not just meeting the requirements of the specific job profiles.

C. Perception

An individual's perception of his importance and the treatment received by him in the organization, might lead him to become a citizen. Perceptions regarding fairness of the employers, justice, openness, autonomy, trust, transparency, employee's participation in decision making, whether or not they are being assigned major responsibilities might have a considerable effect on employee's behavior. A positive perception will surely lead to the birth of many citizens

D. Job Satisfaction

It has been usually found that employees, who are satisfied with their jobs, tend to perform better, have low absenteeism, criticize the organization less and are internally motivated, are lesser inclined to move to another job and are usually more loyal, hence they give birth to citizenship behavior
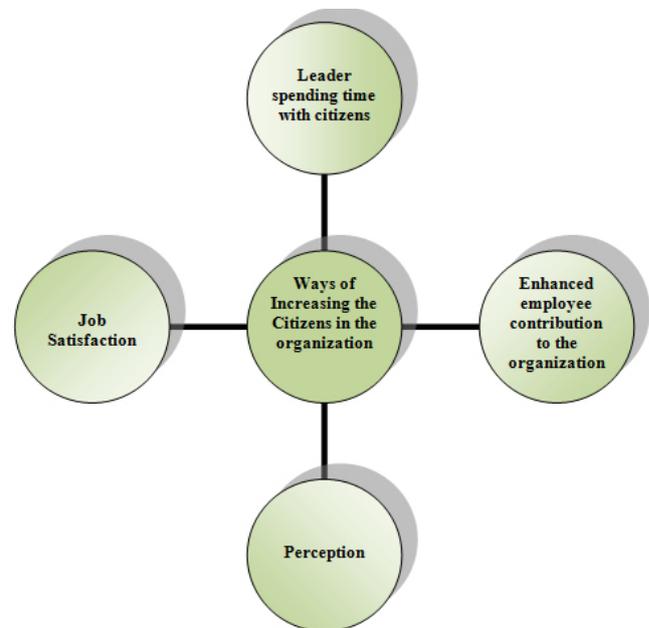

Fig. 2: Ways of increasing the number of citizens in the organization

V. Benefits and Consequences of Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Benefits from organizational citizenship behavior that can be instrumental in organizational success are as follows:
- Increased efficiency of management and employees
- Releasing organizational resources that can be utilized for more industrious purposes
- Reduced needs to allocate scarce resources for functions that only maintain the status quo
- Helping coordinating activities within and outside work groups
- Increased organizational ability to recruit and retain efficient employee
- Increased sustainability of organizational performance
- Improved effectiveness and efficiency of organizational performance (Organ, 1990; 1998; Ryan, 2002) [8].

VI. Consequences

Organizational citizenship behavior is positively related to the welfare of individuals and the smooth functioning of organizations. Nevertheless, some exceptions have been unearthed in specific settings.

A. Performance Appraisal & Reward Allocation

Many researches done in this area indicate that individuals who often engage in organizational citizenship behavior receive more positive performance evaluations and receive a major share in the reward allocation done by the management. (Allen & Rush, 1998; Werner, 1994).All organizations believe in rewarding the employees who have contributed the maximum for the organization. Hence the citizens usually get a lion's share in comparison to the employees [1].

B. Customer Satisfaction

The citizenship behavior promotes amicable and an informal interpersonal relationships amongst employees that leads to better synchronization, ultimately improving the service to customers [1]. Conscientiousness and courtesy ensures that employees are aware of recent developments, which can also facilitate customer satisfaction. Finally, civic virtues uncover

ideas and ways of improving the communication and laisioning between employees and customers as well as optimize products and services

C. Employee Turnover

Organizations and departments that are characterized by prominent levels of organizational citizenship behaviors generally come across minimum employee turnover, apparently, organizational citizenship behaviors is synonymous with higher levels of synchronization and cooperation among employees. Indeed, such behaviors are directly proportional to the team solidity and these actions of solidarity and cohesion are inversely proportional to employee turnover.

VII. Conclusion

The world is looking forward to high performance organizations, this excellence in performance can only be achieved if the numbers of citizens in the organizations are increased by instilling in them the positive perceptions about the organization. Consequentially the voluntary behavior that gets generated is called as the "Organizational Citizenship Behavior", a behavior that describes actions in which employees are willing to go above and beyond their prescribed role requirements. The effective functioning of an organization thus depends on employee efforts that extend beyond formal role requirements. As an employee in an organization try to think am I Indispensable in this company? If your answer is yes try to do things which move you closer to become a Citizen and if your answer is no, you need to learn a lot more!

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