

Quality of Work Life and Organizational Citizenship Behavior among the Employees in Private Universities in Malaysia

Shno Mohammadi¹, *S. Kiumarsi², S. M. Hashemi³

¹ School of social sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), 11800, Malaysia

² Graduate School of Business (GSB), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), 11800, Malaysia

³ School of Housing, Building and Planning (HBP), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), 11800

*kiumarsi78@gmail.com

Abstract

The Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is considered as an important variable in studying any organization. It is relatively difficult to build relationships and improve performance within an organization. This study aims to investigate the relationship between quality of work life (QWL) and organizational citizenship behavior among administrative staffs in private universities in Malaysia. In the current study, QWL refers to the factors such as convenience, financial, career opportunity, and university core value. However, OCB is defined as altruism and conscientiousness. This study proposed the new conceptual framework that considers the QWL's dimensions as the independent variables (IVs), and the OCB's dimensions as the dependent variables (DVs). In the current study, the administrative staffs of private universities in Malaysia are identified as the unit of research analysis. The current study is a cross-sectional study and the quantitative method will be used for collecting data. The techniques of SPSS for descriptive analysis and PLS-SEM model also will be employed to analysis the data collected from the respondents. The present study reveals that the relationships among the above-mentioned variables might be empirically examined in future studies.

Keywords Quality of Work Life, Employee, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Private University

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1. Introduction

Quality of Work Life (QWL) program includes improvement in organizational culture that can support the growth and development of employees in an organization (Benjamin, 2015). As such, investing in people as the core aspect of strategic management is considered in QWL value system (Amraei et al., 2015). Royuela et al. (2009) stated that improving QWL in an organization can significantly contribute to employees' job satisfaction that might ultimately influence their organizational citizenship behavior (OCB).

To improve the management and achieve organizational objectives, managers are required to study human behavior and deal with it (Rezayian, 2005). Behavioral experts have tried to identify individuals' characteristics and their relationship with workplace interactions. They have also looked for the factors influencing organizational behavior such as organizational citizenship behavior, organizational justice, attitudes and desires of individuals, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and organizational culture to name a few. These factors could lead to achieve organizational goals and determine the effectiveness of managers and employees in an organization (Rezayian, 2003). Previous studies have shown that people with a positive attitude towards an organization would possess higher job satisfaction, higher organizational commitment and perceived fairness, better job performance, and ultimately a better corporate citizenship (e.g., Colquitt, 2001). Organizational citizenship behavior refers to the employees' voluntary behavior that is not explained in formal job descriptions, yet it could enhance the organization's efficiency and effectiveness (Robbins and Judge, 2009).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Quality of Work Life

According to (Mathur et al. as cited in Mohammadi et al., 2016), QWL is a concept in behavioral science, which was first, introduced (Davis, 1972). QWL has been widely recognized as a multi-dimensional construct. As Beauregard (2007) believes, satisfaction with QWL was thought to be solely based on "extrinsic" traits of job such as salaries and other tangible benefits, as well as workplace safety and hygiene in the scientific management tradition. However, the human relations approach states that not only extrinsic rewards, but also "intrinsic rewards" are crucial predictors of productivity, efficiency, absenteeism, and turnover. The intrinsic rewards

include work-specific traits, task content, skill levels, autonomy, and challenge. According to QWL philosophy, people are the most important resource in an organization since they are trustworthy, responsible, and capable of making valuable contributions. Thus, they should be treated with dignity and respect (Aketch et al., 2012). QWL is essentially a multidimensional concept and is a way of reasoning about people, work, and the organization. QWL is vital to organizational performance, and it is a key factor influencing employees' motivation at workplace (Kanten and Sadullah, 2012). There are a number of motivational factors such as physical, technological, social, and psychological those are believed to affect employees' QWL in an organization (Kashefi, 2009).

Recently, Nair (2013) defined QWL as the favorable workplace conditions and environment that support and promote employees' satisfaction through providing them with rewards, job security, and growth opportunities. Additionally, Mohammadi et al. (2016) found that employees' performance in one of the Iranian organizations (Bonyad Organization) was highly depend on their level of QWL. The major determinants of QWL include decision-making, authority, growth and development, job security, organizational prestige, feeling of worthwhile accommodation, pay and allowance, promotional avenues, as well as recognition and appreciation (Nair, 2013).

2.2 Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

According to the Podsakoff et al. (2000), the term organizational citizenship behavior was first used by Bateman and Organ (1983). OCB is one of the most widely studied topics in organizational behavior research (Ehrhart & Naumann, 2004). As Ertürk et al. (2004) stated, OCB is one of the emerging management concepts that can enhance organizational effectiveness, efficiency, and profitability. In addition, Turnispeed and Rassuli (2005) believe that OCB refers to performing an extra role and behaviors such as working in a team with other employees, approaching workplace earlier and leaving late, helping other employees, using organizational possessions with care, and disseminating positively in an organization. As such, OCB can improve co-worker and managerial productivity, provide superior efficiency in resource usage and allocation, reduce managerial expenses, provide better coordination of organizational activities across individuals, groups, and functional departments, improve organizational effectiveness for high quality new recruits, increase stability in the organization's performance, and enhance

organizational capability to adapt effectively to environmental changes (Ertürk et al., 2004). There are a number of antecedents that can influence OCB. These factors include job satisfaction, leadership, fairness, perceived organizational support, psychological contract, and commitment (Ravichandran et al., 2007).

A large number of studies have been devoted to investigate the influence of OCB on individual and organizational performance. The results of these studies revealed that OCB brings about positive consequences for organizations (Barbuto et al., 2001; Hodson, 2002; Cardona et al., 2004; Appelbaum et al., 2003). The current study focuses on individuals' perception of QWL that might influence OCB in Malaysian private universities. According to Kasraie et al. (2014), occupational stress, QWL, and job satisfaction influence OCB. They also believe that all these variables play crucial roles in preventing employees from making problems. However, if the mentioned factors are not addressed, the company would encounter employee problems such as low productivity and performance. Cohen and Vygoda (2000) noted that OCB is essential for all organizational forms and it can enhance organizational effectiveness in various ways.

3. Underlying Theories

3.1 Kalleberg's Job Satisfaction Theory (Work Values and Job Rewards)

Kalleberg proposed "Work Value and Job Rewards" or job satisfaction theory in 1977 based on six dimensions of work (1977). The six dimensions for identifying current status of employees' job satisfaction include intrinsic, convenience, financial, relationships with co-workers, career opportunities, and resource adequacy. Intrinsic refers to job a characteristic that allows employees to use their abilities and realize their work outcomes. Convenience deals with the workload and enough time to do that. Financial refers to salary, fringe benefits, and job security. Co-worker relationships refer to whether colleagues are helpful and friendly. The other dimension of this theory is a career opportunity that is related to employees' desire for advancement and recognition. Resource adequacy is the last dimension which refers to employees' desire for having access to enough resources in order to perform well. It also includes having necessary equipment and helpful and competent co-workers to perform job tasks appropriately (Semerek and Peterson, 2007). According to Kalleberg (1977), social scientists concerned with the problems of job within the industrial society which were highly interesting in the notion of job

satisfaction. He believed that rewards from the company, the nature of work, and interaction with citizens and clients could influence workers' job satisfaction and motivation.

This theory often used to measure the level of QWL among employee in organization (Zia ur Rehman et al., 2010). Number of scholars has used this theory to measure the QWL in organization and institution (Mukhtar, 2012; Smerek & Peterson, 2007). It can be argued that the job satisfaction theory often use to measure the QWL, as confirmed by Wooden and Warren (2003) who revealed that job satisfaction is associated with the QWL concept. Therefore, since the aim of this study is to identify the current level of QWL among the administrative staff in public universities, it is more applicable to use Kalleberg job satisfaction theory.

3.2 Herzberg Two Factor Theory (Motivator and Hygiene)

Herzberg two factor theory (motivator and hygiene), , was proposed in 1959 and mainly focuses on having a practical approach towards motivating employees (Herzberg et al., 1959). This initial idea indicated that the factors causing job satisfaction were the opposite of the factors causing job dissatisfaction. Thus, Herzberg conducted a survey study to distinguish the factors that made employees' feeling positive and those which made their feeling negative. The findings of Herzberg's study on 200 technicians and accountants from over nine companies in the US were published in 1959 (Tan and Waheed, 2011). Most of these professionals were asked to explain experiences that made them feel either extremely poor or exceptionally good about their jobs and rate their feelings on these occasions. Responses about good feelings are generally related to job content (motivators), whereas responses about bad feelings are associated with job context (hygiene factor). Motivator includes factors constructed into the job itself, such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, development, and clarity of mission. Hygiene factors are extrinsic towards jobs that include relationship, salary, supervision, and company core values (Herzberg, 1966). These factors have been applied in a number of earlier studies and the obtained results were different (Aketch et al., 2012).

3.3 Organizational Citizenship Behavior Model

Organ (1998) suggests that OCB is composed of five dimensions, namely: altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue. Altruism includes discretionary behaviors that aim at helping specific individual in the situations with an organizationally relevant task or problem. Altruism (Pro-Social Behavior) is defined as the behavior within an organization that is aimed at improving another person's welfare (Organ et al., 2006). Conscientiousness refers to impersonal behaviors such as compliance with norms which are defining a good employee. It involves workers to go beyond minimal requirements in carrying out their assigned tasks (Bambale et al., 2011). Organ et al. (2006) stated that conscientiousness (Extra-role behavior) is another construct similar to OCB. The extra-role behavior is the process of performing ahead of the stated job requirement (Lo et al., 2009). It is defined as behavior that attempts to benefit the organization by going beyond the existing role expectations. Sportsmanship refers to behaviors of refraining from complaining about trivial matters or filing up petty grievances (Bambale et al., 2011). Courtesy includes actions such as consulting with others before decision making, giving others advance notice, and passing along information and issuing reminders to others. Organ as cited in Bambale et al. (2011) noted that civic virtue refers to keeping up with matters that affect an organization such as attending to meetings, contributing to discussions, and performing organizational activities in order to assist and improve the organization.

In the present study, QWL is measured as the favorable workplace conditions and environment that supports and promotes employees' satisfaction by providing employees with convenience, financial, work opportunities, and university core value. Moreover, OCB is evaluated based on altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue. The reason for choosing these dimension is that based on the previous study the importance of dimensions of convenience, financial, work opportunities, and university core values are obvious, it can be noted that in the different field of studies such as management, psychology, and sociology etc. the above mentioned-dimensions were considered as important factors of QWL and job satisfaction in most of the theory such as theories of Walton (1975); Herzberg' two factor theory (1959), and kalleberg's job satisfaction theory (1977). With regards to the core values dimensions it used in this study due to the lack of this dimension in the Kalleberg's job satisfaction theory. It is important t look into the core values dimension since it is associated with QWL (Herzberg, 1959).

4. Conceptual Framework

It is illustrated in Figure 1 that QWL is the independent variable, while OCB is the dependent variable. QWL has four dimensions, namely: convenience, financial, opportunities, and university core value. The five most common behaviors, as defined by Dennis Organ, are: altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, and civic virtue. However, two dimensions are included in current study, namely altruism, conscientiousness.

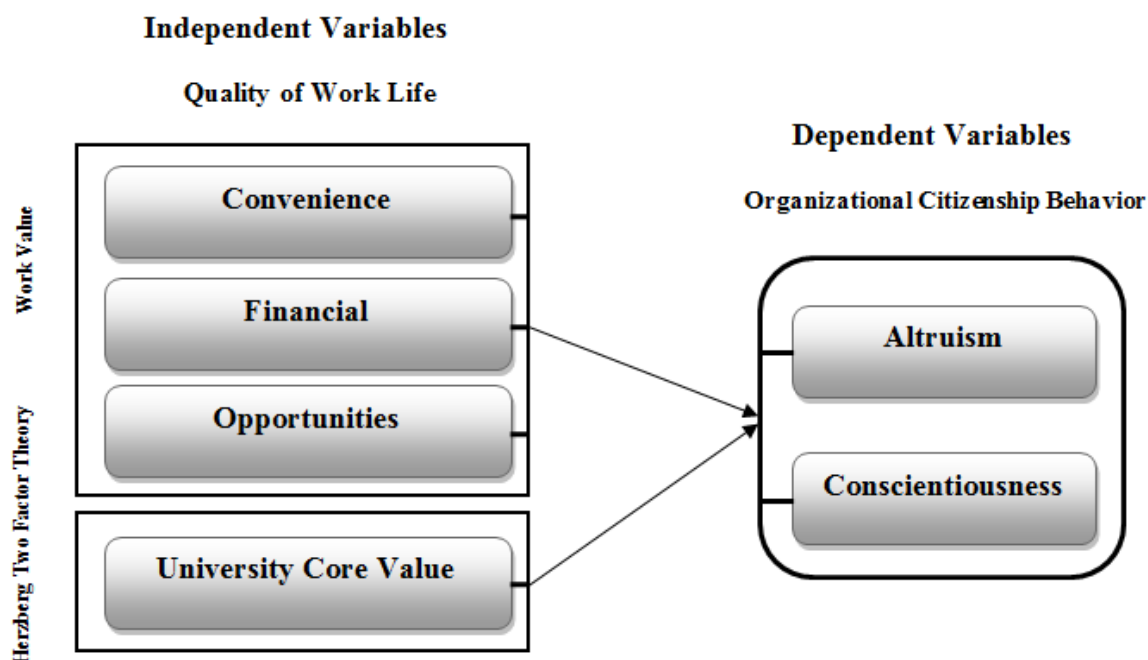


Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework

4.1 Proposed Research Methodology

This study aims to investigate the relationship between QWL and OCB in private universities in Malaysia. This research is considered as a correlational rather than a casual study. In addition, this study will be conducted in a non-contrived setting following Sekaran and Bougie (2010) who noted that co-relational studies are always conducted in the non-contrived setting.

The current study focuses on the insights provided by administrative staff in Malaysian private universities. Besides, the literature (books, journal articles, government and non-governmental reports, thesis, etc.) related to the area of study were reviewed as the secondary

source of data. Therefore, in this study these two methods are used to collect the data from administrative. The questionnaire is used to collect data from the administrative staff. The collected data will be analyzed by using SPSS and PLS software.

5. Implications

Studies on QWL and OCB among administrative staff in private universities are rare, especially in developing countries such as Malaysia. Applying sociological and psychological theories for defining QWL is unique in this regard. The study framework may help in constructing plans and strategies to enhance the QWL and OCB among the administrative staff. Therefore, this study might help university managers to consider the significant variables of QWL which may influence the administrative OCB in private universities in Malaysia. In the current study two theories of QWL namely Kalleberg's job satisfaction theory and (1977) and Herzber's two factor theory (1959) are discussed, which can give the unique and beneficial result with using two theory in the single model of QWL. This kind of contribution of model can be supported by Ozguner and Ozguner (2014) who reported that measurement of employee's sight toward the job could be more effective when two relevance theories are combined.

6. Conclusions

The QWL program plays a crucial role in increasing the productivity of human resources, the efficiency and effectiveness of organizations and corporations in recent years. A strategic human resource program to improve the QWL in organizations is a broad approach. In other words, efficient human resource is essential in the development of organization. The current study focused on the effect of the QWL on empowering employees and their citizenship behavior in Malaysian private universities. As such, the conceptual framework was designed based on two variables namely QWL as the independent variable, and OCB as a dependent variable. In general, QWL is a comprehensive program that can increase employees' satisfaction and commitment etc. as has confirmed by previous studies (Normala, 2010; Kashani, 2012). Therefore, in the current study, understanding administrative staff's perception of QWL in private universities might help to improving the organizational citizenship behavior.

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