

Antecedents of Organizational Citizenship Behaviour Among Primary School Teachers in Alor Setar

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ABSTRACT

Discussion on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) among teachers has gained much interest among scholars. However, a review of past literature indicates lack of study towards the antecedents of teachers' OCB in Malaysia. The study aims to explore the often-overlooked informal relationships between teachers' Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB), the school environment, their level of competency, empowerment, and commitment to the team. It also seeks to understand the impact of specific elements of job satisfaction and organizational commitment on the overall benefit teachers bring to their communities. The focus of this research is to ascertain the real-world implications of these factors on OCB and their organizational effects among teachers in Alor Setar schools. To understand these interactions and their influence on teachers' OCB, relevant hypotheses were formulated, tested, and further examined. As part of this research, 400 primary school teachers in Alor Setar were given a set of questionnaires. The regression analysis results indicated that factors such as the school environment, competency level, empowerment, and team commitment have a significant impact on teachers' OCB. This study holds importance as it delves into the OCB of teachers and their contribution to the increasingly crucial education sector in Malaysia. The findings of this study can guide policymaking in the education sector, particularly in enhancing teachers' OCB and school administrators can use these insights to foster a culture that promotes OCB, thereby improving overall school performance. In the school context, OCBs were found to play a role in student achievement and increase school effectiveness. They free up resources for more productive purposes, help coordinate organisational activities, and are more effective at environmental change.

Keywords: *competency level, empowerment, school environment, teachers' OCB, team commitment*

INTRODUCTION

Teachers who are willing to go above and beyond the call of duty are essential to the success of schools (Somech & Bogler, 2023). Organ (1988) first proposed the term "organizational citizenship behaviour

(OCB)" which is a helpful phrase to characterize these voluntary actions. Originating from Katz (1964) concept of extra-role behaviours, Organ (1988) characterized OCB as a collection of voluntary, helpful, and extra-role actions taken by staff members that are not explicitly or directly acknowledged by the official system of rewards but nevertheless contribute positively to the organization's overall performance and are not subject to contract enforcement. OCB is a question of personal preference, and not engaging in such activity is typically not a ground for discipline issue. According to this definition, a teacher's OCB includes all selfless acts of kindness towards coworkers, administrators, and students (DiPaola & Hoy, 2005).

The majority of academicians concurred that OCB is multifaceted. Five dimensions were identified by Organ (1988), and they are as follows; conscientiousness, sportsmanship, civic virtue, courtesy, and altruism or helping behaviours. Moreover, some studies (Williams & Anderson, 1991) have separated OCB into two categories; behaviour focused on the person (OCBI) and behaviour focused on the organization (OCBO). While the majority of researchers concurred that OCB is multidimensional, DiPaola and Tschannen-Moran (2001) discovered in two distinct factor analytic experiments that one dimension adequately reflected all facets of OCB in educational settings.

A considerable volume of research has been dedicated to pinpointing the origins of Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB). Podsakoff et al. (2000) identified several precursors, including personal characteristics, task attributes, organizational traits, and leadership behaviours. Earlier studies typically concentrated on the initial four categories. Podsakoff et al. (2000) also discovered two main types of individual traits: dispositional variables and employee attitudes. Organ and Ryan's (1995) meta-analysis of 55 studies revealed that job attitudes, specifically school environment, competency level, empowerment, and team commitment, were more reliable predictors of OCB than dispositional factors. A multitude of studies (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Fan et al., 2023; Khalid et al., 2021; Organ, 1988; Williams et al., 1991) have provided robust evidence supporting the connection between school environment, competency level, empowerment, and team commitment with OCB.

It's logical to suggest a positive correlation between these factors. Employees who are satisfied with their roles often reciprocate with positive behaviours, including OCB. The school environment can be characterized as a collection of internal attributes that set school organizations apart from other entities, influencing the behaviour of all school members and playing a crucial role in school operations (Somech & Ohayon, 2019). Additionally, the school environment encompasses a system of values, beliefs, norms, and rules that are consciously accepted and adhered to by all members of the school (Fein et al., 2023).

Meanwhile, competency refers to the skills and knowledge that are needed by employees to perform a job (Noer et al., 2023). Competency consists of customer awareness, teamwork, commitment and contribution, productivity and so on (St. Hatidja et al., 2023). According to Cahyaningrum et al. (2023), he defined competency as a characteristic of a person which results in their effective or superior performance. In a study conducted by McClelland (1973), it was highlighted that competency is an element of performance which is linked to life outcomes. Competencies can be used as a different approach to forecast human performance compared to traditional trait and intelligence techniques. Competencies through this may be associated with broad psychological or behavioural attributes which are linked to extraordinary job and life success (Khan et al., 2015).

Furthermore, Wang et al. (2022) defined empowerment in terms of encouraging and allowing individuals to take personal responsibility to improve the way they do their jobs and contribute to the organizational goals. The creation of a culture encourages people at all levels to help them gain confidence and skills so that they can make a difference. Organization empowerment creates structures and opportunities for people to have more control over their tasks in the employing institution. Meanwhile, the individual empowerment is formed to relate to an increased sense of self-efficacy (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Studies such as Morrison (1996) and Nihoff and Moorman (1993) concluded different outcomes to relate empowerment to OCB

Dasgupta (2024) suggests that an individual's team commitment can indirectly boost an organization's productivity. Aubé et al. (2013) highlighted the importance of team commitment for task performance and its connection to team effectiveness, which encompasses performance, quality, and capability. They concluded that there's a robust association between team commitment and performance, leading to improved outcomes. Team commitment is viewed as the psychological bond between a team member's perception of the team (Pearce & Herbik, 2004), and it's agreed that it has a strong correlation with organizational commitment (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995; Munene, 1995). Peace et al. (2004) identified a significant relationship between team commitment and OCB.

While there is extensive research on Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) in the context of commercial organizations, studies exploring the link between school environment, competency level, empowerment, and team commitment with OCB, particularly in schools, are scarce (Mahmud et al., 2022). Data suggests that OCB is context-specific and varies with the type of organization (Organ, 1988). There are distinct behavioural differences between educational and non-educational settings. As per DiPaola and Hoy (2005), schools are service organizations where teachers, as professionals, are typically committed to providing the best possible care for their students. Consequently, the job attitudes influencing teachers' OCB may differ from those in other organizations. Previous studies have shown a positive impact of school environment, competency level, empowerment, and team commitment on OCB. However, research examining the effects of these factors on overall community behaviour, especially among teachers, is limited. Therefore, this study was undertaken to determine if these factors influence teachers' OCB.

This research aims to explore in detail teacher's OCB, school environment, competency level, empowerment, and team commitment in Malaysia. In addition, the study investigated the influence of school environment, competency level, empowerment, and team commitment on teacher's OCB. The research also aims to explore the improvement of OCB teachers through school environment, competency level, empowerment, and team commitment. In addition, this research is vital because it offers school shareholders about designing strategies to improve OCB teachers through school environment, competency level, empowerment, and team commitment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Antecedence of Teachers' OCB

Studies have shown many variables can improve a teachers' OCB (Tian et al., 2020). Variables of teacher OCB improvement include justice (Tziner & Sharoni, 2014), transformational leadership, job satisfaction (Tanjung, 2023), and organizational culture (Tulung et al., 2020). Other variables that have been shown to improve teachers' OCB include professional commitment (Lestari et al., 2021), organizational commitment (Tharikh et al., 2016), servant leadership (Newman et al., 2017), workplace spirituality (Al-Mahdy et al., 2021), school structure (Mitchell, 2019) and teachers' empowerment (Ahmed, 2021). Among these variables, there are the most potent variables for improving teacher OCB, among others: transformational leadership (Tanjung et al., 2020), organizational culture and job satisfaction (Tulung et al., 2020), organizational justice (Jermsittiparsert et al., 2021), and servant leadership (Ghasemy et al., 2022; Newman et al., 2017). Based on research, teachers' OCB needs to follow up, so that teacher OCB plays a leading role in improving the quality of education.

Nevertheless, there has not been much research on improving teacher OCB through variables from outside and within teachers at once. Factors outside the teacher include school environment and empowerment in Malaysia (Tulung et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2022; Zeinabadi & Salehi, 2011). Factors within the teacher include competency level and team commitment (Shaheen et al., 2021; Yuliansyah et al., 2021). For those reasons, there is a need to conduct this research.

School Environment and Teachers' OCB

Eco-initiatives is a type of discretionary behaviour that involves proposing enhancements to environmental practices and performance (Paillé & Boiral, 2013). Teachers can exhibit Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) in various ways, such as by creating, recommending, and sharing innovative practices (Paillé et al., 2013), minimizing waste and reusing paper (Lee, DeYoung, & Marans, 1995), or undertaking specific actions in the school that contribute to improved environmental performance (Daily et al., 2009). Individuals with a high degree of environmental concern are more likely to display environmentally conscious behaviour (Czap & Czap, 2010; Lynch et al, 2010). Most studies measuring the direct effects of environmental concern on environmentally sensitive behaviour have found low to moderate relationships between these variables. Previous research has shown a weak correlation between environmental concern and behaviour (Albayrak et al, 2013). However, Daily et al. (2009) suggested that individuals with a strong environmental concern are likely to translate this into environmentally friendly actions in the form of OCB within their schools. Those with a high level of environmental concern are more likely to engage in OCB than those with less concern for the environment (Daily et al., 2009).

Competency Levels and teachers' OCB

Employee competency level is made up of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are pertinent to their duties and responsibilities. Mulder (2014) defined competence as an individual's capacity or ability to perform efficiently and effectively. In his definition of competence, he compares or matches capability with ability. In a scenario, the ability to execute effectively and efficiently is the most common definition of the notion of competence. Employees who possess competencies that align with job requirements are more inclined to exhibit behaviors that exceed expectations, such as Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). Competency is strongly associated with the capacity to carry out tasks efficiently. Employees who are competent tend to have the confidence and capability to participate in Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). Furthermore, competence is linked to performance, as employees equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills are likely to yield superior outcomes (Rustandi, Suadma & Pratami, 2023).

Empowerment and Teachers' OCB

Several studies and literature concluded that empowerment has a significant and positive impact and effect on teachers' organizational behaviours (Somech et al., 2023). Organizational behaviours are actions and attitudes of teachers towards one another and towards the educational institution (Thurlings, Evers, & Vermeulen, 2015). Positive organizational behaviour among teachers should be promoted and embraced in all educational institutions since its purpose is to create an environment that is geared towards the sustainability and improvement of the organization. The different dimensions of teachers' organizational behaviours include organizational commitment (Bogler & Somech, 2004, Fu & Deshpande, 2014), professional commitment (Hackman & Lawler, 1971), organizational citizenship behaviour (Duke & Gansander, 1990; Taylor & Bogotch, 1994), supervisory support (Ellen, Ferris, & Buckley, 2013) and job involvement (Hallberg & Schaufelli, 2006). Hence, teacher empowerment can lead to positive organizational behaviour and could eventually play an important role in organizational success and stability (Bogler et al., 2004).

Team Commitment and Teachers' OCB

In recent years, the concept of commitment within the framework of self-managed work teams has gained considerable attention (for instance, Kirkman & Shapiro, 2001; Riketta & Van Dick, 2005). Employees make a distinction between their dedication to their work groups (known as team commitment) and their allegiance to their organizations (referred to as organizational commitment) (Bishop et al., 2005). Field theory suggests that the closeness and prominence of environmental factors significantly influence individuals' responses to their surroundings (Mathieu & Hamel, 1989). As a

result, employees may differentiate between team commitment and organizational commitment because the organization may appear more distant and less noticeable than the team in their daily work life. In simpler terms, employees might find it harder to “connect” with the organization than with the team, leading to a comparatively lower level of commitment to the organization than to the self-managed work team (De Lara & Rodriguez, 2007). Previous studies have demonstrated a robust and significant correlation between team commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour (Bishop & Scott, 2000; Bishop et al., 2000; De Lara et al., 2007). Understanding these dynamics can provide valuable insights into employee behaviour, specifically how team commitment influences OCB and help organizations foster a work environment that encourages positive behaviours.

Hypotheses Statements

H1 School environment has a positive significant relationship with the teacher's OCB.

H2 Competency level has a positive significant relationship with the teacher's OCB.

H3 Empowerment has a positive significant relationship with the teacher's OCB.

H4 Team commitment has a positive significant relationship with the teacher's OCB.

METHODOLOGY

The study's population consisted of 3215 primary school teachers in the Kota Setar district as of September 2023. The sample size, determined based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table, was 346 primary school teachers in Alor Setar. To gather data, 400 questionnaires were distributed using simple random sampling techniques. The data collection instrument was a questionnaire adapted from previous studies. The demographic section captured information such as respondents' gender, age, ethnicity, marital status, nationality, work experience, and department. The school environment scales were adapted from Fisher and Fraser's (1990) School Level Environmental Questionnaire (SLEQ). The competency level was adopted from Wagner and Morse (1975), while the empowerment and team commitment scales were adopted from the School Participant Empowerment Scale (SPES) by Short and Rinehart (1992) and Allen and Meyer (1990) respectively. Each variable was assessed with six questions, rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The questionnaire, initially written in English, was translated into Malay and back-translated to minimize translation bias, following the method of Van de Vijver and Hambleton (1996). Data analysis was conducted using SPSS software version 26 and included frequency analysis, reliability analysis, Pearson correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis.

FINDINGS

Table 1 below shows the demographic profile of the respondents. A total of 364 questionnaires were collected from respondents, comprising 293 (80.5%) female and 71 (19.5%) male employees participating in the study. The age distribution was as follows: 20 to 29 years old (6 respondents, 1.6%), 30 to 39 years old (100 respondents, 27.5%), 40 to 49 years old (179 respondents, 49.2%), and 50 years old and above (79 respondents, 21.7%). The majority of respondents were Malay (345 respondents, 94.8%), with a small representation of Chinese (5 respondents, 1.4%), Indian (10 respondents, 2.7%) and others (4 respondents, 1.1%). Marital status included single (13 respondents, 3.6%), married (330 respondents, 90.7%), and others (21 respondents, 5.8%). In terms of education levels, respondents included SPM (13 respondents, 3.6%), STPM (10 respondents, 2.7%), Diploma (20 respondents, 5.5%), Degree (283 respondents, 77.7%), Master (36 respondents, 9.9%) and PhD (2 respondents, 0.6%).

Table 1: Profile of The Respondents

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	71	19.5
	Female	293	80.5
Age	20 to 29 years old	6	1.6
	30 to 39 years old	100	27.5

	40 to 49 years old	179	49.2
	50 years old and above	79	21.7
Race	Malay	345	94.8
	Chinese	5	1.4
	Indian	10	2.7
	Others	4	1.1
Marital status	Single	13	3.6
	Married	330	90.7
	Others	21	5.8
Education	SPM	13	3.6
	STPM	10	2.7
	Diploma	20	5.5
	Degree	283	77.7
	Master	36	9.9
	PhD	2	0.6

Table 2 describes the reliability and Correlation analysis for the study variables. The Cronbach's alpha for the five independent variables were 0.822 for school environment, 0.819 for competency level, 0.850 for empowerment, and 0.880 for team commitment. Meanwhile, for dependent variable; OCB, the Cronbach's alpha value is 0.747.

Table 2: Reliability and Pearson Correlation Analysis

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. School environment	($\alpha=0.822$)				
2. Competency level	.46*	($\alpha=0.819$)			
3. Empowerment	.33*	.61*	($\alpha=0.850$)		
4. Team commitment	.44*	.53*	.65*	($\alpha=0.880$)	
5. OCB	.41*	.59*	.53*	.54*	($\alpha=0.747$)

Note: $N=364$, $*p<.05$

The result of Pearson correlation analysis revealed teachers' OCB is correlated positively and significantly with school environment ($r=.41$, $p<.05$), competency level ($r=.59$, $p<.05$), empowerment ($r=.53$, $p<.05$), and team commitment ($r=.54$, $p<.05$). The results of correlation analysis provide initial support for the study hypotheses.

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis

Variables	B	Significance
School Environment	.127	.005
Competency Level	.326	.000
Empowerment	.129	.028
Team Commitment	.189	.002
R Square	.445	
Adjusted R Square	.437	
F Test	57.41	

Dependent variable: OCB

The effects of the independent variables (school environment, competency level, empowerment, and team commitment) on the dependent variable, OCB, were determined by using multiple regression analysis (Table 3). The results show that school environment ($\beta=0.127$, $p<0.05$) had significant positive effects on OCB. Next, competency level ($\beta=0.326$, $p<0.05$) had significant positive effects on OCB. Furthermore, empowerment ($\beta=0.129$, $p<0.05$) and team commitment ($\beta=0.189$, $p<0.05$) also had significant positive effects on OCB. The whole model explained 43.7% of the variance in the dependent variable (OCB). Therefore, all hypotheses developed in this study are accepted.

DISCUSSION

The research findings highlight several significant factors related to OCB. Firstly, school environment was found to have a significant positive relationship with OCB. This aligns with research conducted by Daily et al. (2009) where it is suggested that individuals with a strong environmental concern are likely to translate this into environmentally friendly actions in the form of OCB within their schools and those with a high level of environmental concern are more likely to engage in OCB than those with less concern for the environment. Individuals with a high level of environmental concern can make a significant difference in their immediate environment by translating their concern into actionable behaviours.

Moreover, this study's findings also demonstrated that the level of competency significantly positively influenced OCB. This aligns with Kagaari's (2007) research, where a regression analysis with OCB as the independent variable showed that competencies accounted for 68 percent of the variance in OCB. Organizations might consider investing in training and development programs to enhance the competency levels of their employees. This could lead to an increase in OCB, which is beneficial for the organization.

Furthermore, this study's findings also identified that empowerment significantly positively influenced OCB, and this is aligned with a study by Somech et al., (2023). Organizations might consider structuring themselves in a way that allows employees more autonomy and decision-making power, which could foster a sense of empowerment and subsequently increase OCB.

The fourth variable in this study which is team commitment also had a positive significant relationship with OCB. Previous studies by Bishop et al., (2000) and De Lara et al. (2007) posit the same results related to team commitment and OCB. This implied that team commitment can potentially have a broader impact on organizational culture, and even influencing industry standards for employee behaviour and commitment.

CONCLUSION

This study had been conducted to identify the antecedents of organizational citizenship behaviour among primary school teachers in Alor Setar. 400 questionnaires were distributed and 364 were accepted and can be used for the analysis. The result of frequency analysis on the demographic background of the respondents revealed that there were more female respondents rather than male. Most of the respondents were between the age of 40 to 49 years old. Majority of the respondents were Malay, married and the highest level of education of the respondents who answered the questionnaires was Degree. The reliability results for this study shows that all items were very good, and it can be used to measure the variables in this study. Result for the Pearson correlation analysis for this study shows all variables had significant correlation and provide an initial support for this study. The regression analysis shows school environment ($\beta = 0.127$, $p < 0.05$), competency level ($\beta = 0.326$, $p < 0.05$), empowerment ($\beta = 0.129$, $p < 0.05$) and team commitment ($\beta = 0.189$, $p < 0.05$) had significant positive relationship on OCB. This research shows that the improvement of OCB in the context of education in Malaysia can be made through improving school environment, competency level, empowerment, and team commitment. Teacher's OCB tend to improve more quickly by these factors. Strategies to enhance teacher OCB based on this research are: strengthening having forward-looking, committing to teacher progress, building community, increasing self-confidence to be able to complete tasks, building a good perception of the strengths possessed, the virtues of the organization, the liking for the organization, and the integrity of the organization.

The study's findings could be expanded to include the effects of other variables, such as perceived supervisory support or job satisfaction. In addition, because the current study was conducted in primary schools, it may be worthwhile to look into middle and high schools to see if the findings presented here are representative of the overall situation of teachers across all levels. It is also suggested that in order

to fully represent Malaysia, future studies should enlarge the sample to include instructors of both genders and from both primary and secondary education levels. This larger focus would improve the findings' generalizability and offer a more thorough grasp of the variables affecting teacher's OCB.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Mahmud, L. and Mat Noor, A.N. conceived and planned the experiments. Mahmud, L. carried out the experiments and data preparation. Nik Abdullah, N.A. contributed to the interpretation of the results. Mahmud, L. and Md Nor, M.N. took the lead in writing the manuscript. All authors provided critical feedback and helped shape the research, analysis and manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

We certify that the article is the Authors' and Co-Authors' original work. The article has not received prior publication and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. This research/manuscript has not been submitted for publication nor has it been published in whole or in part elsewhere. We testify to the fact that all Authors have contributed significantly to the work, validity and legitimacy of the data and its interpretation for submission to Jurnal Intelek.

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