

## **Exploring the Impact of Behavior Empowerment on Organization Citizenship Behavior**

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### **Abstract**

With the unprecedented situation caused due to Covid 19 the ways in which organizations function are changing dramatically. It has brought shift in the perception of organizations towards its human resources or employees. Remote working or work from home has become new normal now. And it has changed the equation amongst organizational members; particularly superior and subordinates.

Behavior empowerment that empowers subordinates with trust, flexibility and authority has become defining factor like never before in determining employee's attitude towards the organization. Whereas organizational citizenship behaviour exhibited by employees have become crucial for sustainability of organization.

This study was conducted to explore the impact of Behavior Empowerment (BE) on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) of employees. Data was collected from 135 employees working in I.T. sector. Strong positive correlation was found among Behavior Empowerment (BE) and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB).

The results of regression analysis showed significant role of behavioural empowerment in predicting Organizational Citizenship Behavior. The findings of this study supported the earlier findings that leader behaviour can bring about prominent change in behaviour of subordinates.

The study gives suggestions on how behavioural empowerment can be used to generate organization citizenship Behavior of employees. Towards the end the limitations of the study are given and scope for future research is discussed.

**Key words** - Behavior Empowerment, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, IT, Leader's Behavior

### **Introduction**

In the ever changing world; work scenario is changing dramatically. With situation of pandemic causing anxiety and insecurity in minds of employees about their future and job, behaviour of supervisors /Managers have become crucial than ever before.

Working from home/ remote working has become a norm now and employees are struggling to adjust with this new-normal. When employees are working away from their workplace, the treatment and behavioural empowerment they receive from their supervisor becomes crucial source for them to get motivation to keep going.

The term “Organizational Citizenship Behavior” (OCB) has been coined by Organ and his colleagues (Bateman & Organ, 1983). The concept of Organizational Citizenship Behavior denotes whatever employees do voluntarily or beyond their predetermined legally binding commitments for the organization.

OCB is optional and may not be compensated or perceived by organizations. However, it may be reflected in positive perception towards supervisors and colleagues and better work performance (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983)

This paper explores the role behavioural empowerment plays in causing organizational citizenship behaviour of employees. It also investigates the relationship of two antecedents of behavioral empowerment namely trust and autonomy with organizational citizenship behaviour. It further examines if organizational citizenship behaviour changes based on gender and age of individuals.

## **Literature Review & Hypothesis**

Behaviour empowerment can be understood as a set of leadership behaviors that endow subordinates with power and responsibility (Arnold et al 2000). While, Organizational Citizenship Behaviors is behaviour of individuals that may or may not be recognized by the formal rewards system, however in the aggregate it promotes the effective functioning of the organization (Organ, 1988)

When the supervisor empowers his employees Konczak et al. (2000), they share data and information with their employees (Hakimi et al.,2010) that helps employees to improve their performance. While distributing the power with subordinates empowering leaders also make them accountable for their own results (Konczak et al., 2000).

Empowering behaviour of supervisor makes all the necessary information available to them, hence they can think critically. This results in Self-directed decision-making of employees (Van Dierendonck and Dijkstra, 2012).

When supervisor shares the resources and information with employees; employees also tend to share information with each other (Pearce and Sims, 2002, Arnold et al., 2000). Empowering supervisors also create training and skills enhancing opportunities for subordinates (Pearce and Sims, 2002).

Hence, it is hypothesized that,

H1 – If trust of supervisors in employees is high Organization Citizenship Behavior of employees will also be high.

H2 – If autonomy given by supervisors to employees is high Organization Citizenship Behavior of employees will also be high.

H3 – If Behavior Empowerment is high Organizational Citizenship Behavior will also be high.

H4 – There will be difference in the organizational Citizenship Behavior of male and female respondents.

H5 – Level of organizational Citizenship Behavior will be different for different age groups.

## Methods

The data for this study was collected from 135 employees working in I.T. (Information Technology) sector in Pune, India. Total 150 questionnaires were distributed electronically, out of which 135 usable questionnaires were returned giving a total response rate of 85 %.

The sample consisted of 65% male respondents. 79% respondents were graduates and 14 % had post graduate degree. 41% respondents were married.

## Measures

**Behavioral Empowerment (BE)** - Behavioral Empowerment was measured using the scales developed by scale by-Niehoff, Moorman, Blakely & Fuller (2001). There were 15 items in the scale. Each item was measured using a 7 point Likert scale from 1 to 7 (1= Never, 5= Sometimes and 7 = Always). Sample items include, “My supervisor wants me to get actively involved in work without being told or without seeking permission from anyone, whenever required”, My supervisor “encourages me to openly express my emotions and concerns” and “My supervisor develops trustworthy relationship with me by sharing required information”. (Cronbach’s alpha = .87)

Trust – Item number 1, 5,6,9,11,14 from behavioural empowerment scale measured the trust of supervisors on his employees.

Autonomy – Item number 2,3 and 15 of the behavioural empowerment scale measured autonomy given by supervisor to his employees.

**Organization Citizenship Behavior (OCB)** - Organization Citizenship Behavior was measured using the scale developed by Lee and Allen (2002). The scale contains 16 items. Each item was measured using a 7 point Likert scale from 1 to 7 (1= Never, 5= Sometimes and 7 = Always).

Sample items include, “I Show pride when representing the organization in public”, “I Show genuine concern and courtesy toward co-workers, even under the most trying business or personal situations”, and “I Adjust my work schedule to accommodate other employees’ requests for time off”. (Cronbach’s alpha = .94)

### Research Model

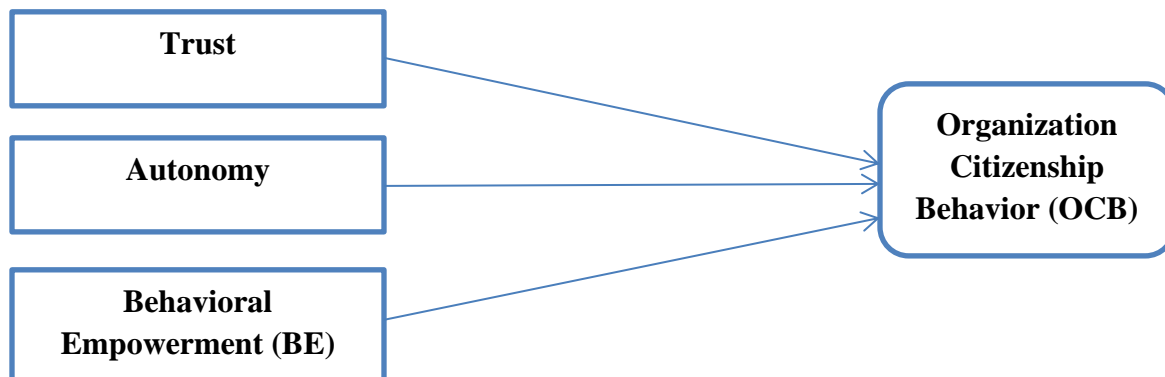


Figure 1 – Research Model

### Data Analysis & Results

Table 1- Mean, Std. Deviation and Zero Order Correlations among study variables

Variable	M	SD	T	A	BE	OCB
Trust	5.93	.848	1	.817**	.616**	.691**
Autonomy	5.68	.852		1	.829**	.705**
Behavioral Empowerment	5.50	1.092			1	.455**
Organization Citizenship Behavior	5.59	.590				1

\* $p < .05$     \*\* $p < .01$

**Table 2 – Regression Results**

	<b>Independent Variable</b>	<b>Dependent Variable</b>	<b>Unstandardized <math>\beta</math></b>	<b>t</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b><math>\Delta R^2</math></b>
<b>H1</b>	Trust	Organization Citizenship Behavior	.481**	11.035	.478	.478
<b>H2</b>	Autonomy	Organization Citizenship Behavior	.488**	11.470	.494	.497
<b>H3</b>	Behavioral Empowerment	Organization Citizenship Behavior	.246**	5.901	.202	.207

\* $p < .05$     \*\* $p < .01$

**Table 3 – T Test Results**

			<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig</b>
H4	Organization Citizenship Behavior	Male	5.46	.683	9.511	.002
		Female	5.67	.521		

**Table 4 – ANOVA Results**

			<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig</b>
H5	Organization Citizenship Behavior	Age 20 -30 yrs	5.00	.592	3.795	.025
		Age 30 -40 yrs	5.56	.497		
		Age 40 -50 yrs	5.77	.816		

Mean, standard deviations and correlations for all variables are reported in Table 1. Strong correlations were found between trust, autonomy, behavioural empowerment (BE), and Organization Citizenship Behavior (OCB).

Multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses. Variables like age, education and gender were controlled for and were entered into model 1 to nullify any impact these variables may have in prediction of dependent variable.

The results in Table 2 (Controlling for age, education and gender) show complete support for H1 H 2 and H3.

Results of T Test for Gender and ANOVA for age groups show support to H4 and H5 respectively.

## Discussion

This paper throws light on the relationship of trust, autonomy and behavioural empowerment with organizational citizenship behaviour. It further explores if organizational citizenship behaviour is different for different age groups and genders.

The study found that higher trust of supervisors in employees ( $\beta = .481^{**}$ ,  $t = 11.035$ ,  $R^2 = .478$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .478$ ) and higher autonomy given by supervisors to employees ( $\beta = .488^{**}$ ,  $t = 11.470$ ,  $R^2 = .494$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .497$ ) leads to higher Organization Citizenship Behavior of employees.

Behavioral empowerment has an impact on work contexts of employee and is able to both provide them with necessary working resources (like required information) and stimulate their Organizational Citizenship behavior. The data supported the hypothesis that higher Behavior Empowerment leads to higher Organizational Citizenship Behavior. ( $\beta = .246^{**}$ ,  $t = 5.901$ ,  $R^2 = .202$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .207$ )

The study further claims that female respondents shows higher organizational Citizenship Behavior than male respondents ( $F = 9.511$ ,  $p = .002$ ) and older employees ( $F = 3.795$ ,  $p = .025$ ) shows higher level of organizational Citizenship Behavior.

Higher Organization Citizenship Behavior of older employees can be justified as the employees grow older and spend more time span with the organization; they tend to be more attached to the organization and are ready to go beyond their call of duty for the organization.

While, female also tend to have more commitment and emotional attachment to the work and workplace than their male counterparts hence they have shown higher organization citizenship behavior than male respondents.

## Conclusion

Organization Citizenship Behavior has many benefits not only for the employees but also for the organization. As employees contribute over and above their call of duty, it results in overall

higher level of efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. The study proved that behaviour of supervisor towards the subordinates in terms of empowering them may result in higher level of Organization Citizenship Behavior of employees. Further, antecedents of Organization Citizenship Behavior like trust and autonomy also have shown to have significant role in Organization Citizenship Behavior. Organizations can certainly think of the trust, autonomy as well as behavioural empowerment provided by supervisors as important factors in order to generate citizenship behaviour of employees.

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