

ANTECEDENT OF STUDENT CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOURS (SCB) WITHIN PAKISTANI HIGHER EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT.

Dr Muhammad Nawaz.

Assistant Professor Sindh University Laar Campus, Badin,
Sindh. Pakistan

Tayyaba Rafique Makhdoom

Lecturer, Business Administration, Sindh University Laar
Campus Badin

Noor Baloch.

PhD Scholar, Institute of Commerce, University of Sindh,
Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan.

ABSTRACT

Purpose: *This research was conducted to identify and understand the antecedents of Students citizenship behaviours (SCB) within Pakistani higher educational context. SCB regarded as a significant factor in student academic success and future employment. However, literature is silent about antecedents that influence SCB within Pakistani higher educational context.*

Methodology: *This study utilized qualitative approach to investigate antecedents. Focused groups and semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted to understand the experiences of the research participants.*

Findings: *Data analysis reported the role of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards in SCB. This study further identified dark rewards responsible for SCB.*

Practical Implications: *This study contributes in knowledge by identifying various rewards responsible for SCB. Furthermore, this study demonstrates how dark reward contribute to SCB. However, one of the key limitation of this research is being a qualitative study it is context bound.*

Key words: Student citizenship behaviour, Antecedents, rewards, Higher education. Pakistan.

1. INTRODUCTION

Organisational citizenship behaviours (OCB) are one of the fundamental behaviours that enhance the performance of organizations. OCB refers to voluntary and positive behaviours of staff to maximise performance of the organisation. Researcher () established that in educational context students citizenship behaviours (SCB) not only augment co-students achievements but also have impact upon institutional performance. However, in best of my knowledge researchers have not investigated why student involve in citizenship behaviours within Pakistani higher educational context. This study is attempted to explore antecedents of SCB.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Antecedents of Student Citizenship Behaviour in the global context.

Religiosity is one of the associated antecedents of SCB. Annuar Khalid *et al.* (2013) draw our attention towards the role of religiosity in citizenship behaviour among undergraduate students. Vitell *et al.* define 'religiosity' as:

“...the degree to which an individual is a religious person apart from his/her particular religious beliefs and the way that those beliefs are manifested” (2009:602).

Annuar Khalid *et al.* (2013) observe that intrinsic religiosity (i.e., offering prayer, doing charitable work) has a positive impact on the citizenship behaviour shown towards individuals, whereas extrinsic religiosity (i.e., to achieve worldly goals) contributes to citizenship behaviour that benefits the organisation. However, they did not consider the ideological relationship between students and institutions. Earlier, King and Williamson (2005) reported that religiosity would influence attitude only when there is an ideological consistency between the organisational stance and the employees.

Apart from religiosity, self-control is also recognised as an antecedent of SCB. Zettler (2011) explored the relationship between citizenship and the counter-work academic behaviour of students, concluding that student citizenship behaviour is positively related to self-control, but negatively related to negative behaviour. The earlier study of Marcus and Schuler (2004) also supports these findings, where it was seen that individuals with greater self-control can understand and estimate the outcome of their behaviour, whereas individuals with less self-control are more exposed to negative behaviour. However, when assessing SCB, Zettler (2011) adopted the scale of Gehring (2006) which is borrowed and modified from research conducted on OCB in the business context.

While Zettler (2011) examined the role of self-control in SCB, intrinsic motivation has also been identified as a key antecedent of SCB. Chen and Carey (2009) reported that intrinsic motivation is a leading contributor in self-regulated SCB. However, further research is still needed to fully understand the role of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in SCB.

In addition to self-control, the classroom environment and personal interest of the students to academic learning have been identified as contributors to SCB. Myers *et al.* (2015a) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between SCB, classroom climate and emotional/cognitive interest in academic life through a survey of 416 students, concluding that these were all antecedents of citizenship behaviour.

2.2. Consequences of Student Citizenship Behaviour

SCB has been recognised as a vital element needed to foster academic success, career development, socialisation and retention in students during the early stages of their degrees.

Academic success is a significant outcome of SCB. Ehtiyar *et al.* (2010) examined the role of OCB in the academic success of students, pointing out that there is a positive relationship between a student's likeness (fondness) for an institution and OCB; the student who likes an institution will show more OCB. In addition, students participate more in OCB in the early years of their education. They also demonstrated that OCB and GPA have a positive relationship. However, their analysis did not take account of the antecedents of likeness, nor did they examine any social or cultural elements.

In addition to contributing to academic success, SCB is also a governing factor in skill and motivation development among students. Poropat (2011) states that it is the prime objective of a modern academic system to produce a skilled and well-motivated workforce for the job market. He further articulates that the impact of citizenship performance on the academic achievement of students (and on their subsequent employment) has not yet been fully considered within academia. Although various studies of citizenship behaviour have recruited students as the research sample, they have not yet ascertained the impact of citizenship performance on academic achievement. Poropat (*ibid.*) thus conducted a study in the academic context to examine the role of citizenship performance on the academic performance of selected students, finding that there is indeed a direct relationship between academic performance and citizenship performance.

Beside skill development among students, various types of SCB are driving factors for students' early socialisation and their retention within an academic institution. Wilcox *et al.* (2005) state that a positive SCB is vital for fresh students' socialisation and integration within their new academic setting. Their study aimed to ascertain how the social support of co-students impacts on these first year students. They found that staying in university-managed student accommodation helped these fresh students to integrate into their new environment. However, they report that this system only works when a new student is able to find a compatible friend who provides him/her with suitable social and emotional support during the first year. They also ascertained that the impact of tutor support and course friends is important, albeit that it contributes less to the successful social integration of first year students. Mackie (1998) notes that students who did not get appropriate social support from their co-students left the course in the early stages of the first year.

Generally, OCB is considered as a positive phenomenon within the organisational setting.

“Since its original connection with a desirable job attitude, OCB has almost always been depicted in a positive manner in subsequent research. As a result, three basic assumptions have generally guided the research on OCB to date: (1) that OCB stems from positive or non-self-serving motives (2) that OCB facilitates the effective functioning of organizations and (3) that citizenship in organizations ultimately benefits employees” (Bolino *et al.*, 2004:230).

However, the idea of OCBs as only positive phenomena has been challenged. Van Dyne *et al.* maintain that:

“...although Organ (1990) defines OCB as positive in terms of both intention and outcome, it is possible to imagine intentionally positive acts of extra-role behaviours that have negative outcomes” (1995:278).

Podsakoff *et al.* (1993) point out that individuals may become involved in OCB due to personal benefits. Overall, such self-centred attitudes inducing individuals to engage in OCB might not be good for the organisation.

Likewise, Organ and Ryan (1995) have shown that OCB could hinder the performance of the employee, because employees who become more involved in OCB tend to focus less upon their own job-related obligations. In addition, Gilbert and Silvera (1996) state that a worker demonstrating OCB could convey a non-verbal message to superiors about a co-worker's incompetency. Bolino *et al.* (2004:234) outline the potential antecedent of citizenship behaviour that could be harmful to an organisation:

- Employees can facilitate co-workers to create a positive image to their immediate manager for future gain.
- Employees who normally take a long lunch break then stay on longer in the office than their counterparts to compensate for the lunch break time.
- Employees who offer help to other staff members show their immediate manager that they are more competent and skilful than their colleagues.
- Sometimes, staff members can show citizenship behaviour just to avoid formal job responsibilities.
- Employees can help others to cope with loneliness or avoid family problems and other commitments, but in doing so may neglect their own job.

Bolino *et al.* (2004:234) further highlight potential negative outcome citizenship behaviour backed by ‘dark’ (i.e., negative) antecedents as below:

- Staff cannot focus on their official job description.
- Citizenship behaviour backed by dark antecedents can increase the operational cost of the business.
- If employees spend extra time working on a site, it is a serious management fault.
- Citizenship behaviour backed by dark intentions made it difficult for employees to differentiate between in-role and extra-role work.
- Negative citizenship behaviour may unnecessarily compel other workers to display positive citizenship behaviour.
- People with dark orientations show poor helping behaviour.
- Such citizenship behaviour could develop stress among staff members (e.g., portraying themselves as good employees, they need to show compulsory citizenship behaviour).

The two extracts above reveal that dark negative intentions or misconceived rewards could wrongly support citizenship behaviour.

3. Research methodology

It was decided that the qualitative approach was the most appropriate tool by which to aim to understand antecedent of SCB. Being a researcher, we therefore argue that the researcher is a vital part of the research, and that his/her correct engagement with the research can generate reliable data. Qualitative research would assist me to explore the phenomena in greater depth. It would also allow us to acquire rich data from participants, as the data was collected in a natural setting utilising multiple data collection strategies. In this study, we have followed the advice of Yin (2011), who suggests that if you want to understand phenomena in the natural setting and through people's experiences, you need to select a qualitative approach. From five qualitative approaches we selected phenomenological approach to understand phenomena grounded in the experience of the participants. Multi data collection methods were utilised. Furthermore, five focus group and twenty semi-structured interviews were conducted and analysed to examine and identify antecedents of SCB

4. Findings and interpretation

The data analysis shows that rewards play a key role in the dynamics of SCB. Literature review suggests that people perform an activity or action for the sake of rewards, and these rewards can be intrinsic or extrinsic.

4.1. Intrinsic Rewards

Intrinsic rewards are those rewards that people feel by performing a particular act (Shamir, 1991). The first intrinsic rewards sub-theme identified in my study is the fulfilment of responsibility in a complete manner. The study participants claim that they are not at UOSJP just to acquire an academic service (their qualification). They feel the need to make an effort to make UOSJP a better place to acquire knowledge. Clary *et al.* (1998) state that people want to express value by their acts. It seems that students feel that until they support their community through their own positive and helping behaviour, their concept of education remains unfulfilled. Thomas (2009) also maintains that doing the best thing for society boosts the morale of people. A possible explanation for this might be that students feel some obligation towards society and want to do something positive for the academic community.

The second sub-theme of intrinsic rewards is religious rewards. The results of this study indicate that students help and support their co-students, staff and faculty members, and the institution in order to make God pleased, as God has ordered them to serve their fellow human beings. Moreover, the study participants believe that if they create easiness for the people of God, God will create easiness for them also.

“Religious employees believe that God is their ultimate employer and that He will reward whatever they [the employees] do within their organizations” (Olowookere, 2014:52).

Converse *et al.* (2012) use the term ‘karmic investment’, arguing that when individuals anticipate a result that is beyond their control, they will display enhanced citizenship behaviour by investing time and money to gain a reward from God (in the shape of the anticipated result). One possible explanation for this might be that, in the academic context, students are evaluated by their tutors from time to time, a process that is certainly beyond their control. This could be one reason why students become involved in citizenship

behaviour, as they might perceive this to bring the anticipated rewards from God. This finding is consistent with Annuar Khalid *et al.* (2013), who state that students who practise their religion or who have religious beliefs exhibit citizenship behaviour towards other students.

The third intrinsic rewards sub-theme for SCB is to feel competent. The study participants claim that whenever they support another student in their studies, they feel they are displaying their competence. Likewise, some participants claim that whenever their colleagues, teacher or other staff ask them for support, it indicates that those individuals believe that they can help them in a way that is better than other students. Okun *et al.* (1998) state that people participate in volunteering to enhance their self-esteem. A possible explanation for this might be that students help others due to the feeling of competence it produces, as well as to simply feel good about oneself.

The fourth sub-theme of intrinsic rewards is that of personal development. The results from this current study show that when students organise or participate in an event, or participate in a stage performance, then such activities enhance their abilities. Moreover, these events may provide students with a platform where they can practise what they learn in class.

Lavelle (2010) explains that volunteerism and OCB are quite similar, in that both are discretionary and deliberate. Omoto and Snyder (1995) and Okun *et al.* (1998) note that people volunteer to achieve personal development and experience. It seems that, in the context of UOSJP, participation in citizenship behaviour is an opportunity for personal development in these students.

The fifth sub-theme of intrinsic rewards is to show family background. The study participants claim that they undertook positive actions with co-students, staff, faculty members and the institution because they want to show their family background. The study participants claim that their parents provide them with good training, advising them to help others, and so their actions show that they have acquired good life values from their parents.

“Satisfactions accrue to the person from the expression of attitudes and behaviour reflecting his cherished beliefs and self-image. the reward is not so much a matter of social recognition or monetary advantage as of establishing his self-identity, confirming his notion of the sort of person he sees himself be, and expressing the values appropriate to this self-concept” (Katz and Kahn, 1966:346).

Individuals may want to build self-worth through their values, in that “self-concept is an ideology that people attempt to express and validate in their behaviour” (Shamir, 1991:413). One possible explanation for this might be that students may participate in citizenship behaviour with the motive of showing their self-concept based on the values they have learnt from their parents.

The sixth sub-theme relates to affiliation rewards. Some study respondents claim that they support their teachers because they themselves are children of teachers. In addition, some wanted to become teachers in the future. It seems that these UOSJP students feel affiliation while supporting the faculty, due to either parental influence or future career orientation. This finding was unexpected and suggests that these students are experiencing an attachment with faculty members. In addition, this attachment inclines students to display citizenship behaviour towards others at the university.

The seventh sub-theme of intrinsic rewards is to make co-students more competent. The study participants claim that they want to enhance the skills of every other student. When all students are skilful, then they will be able to compete academically. Such competition will boost both the performance of individuals and the institution as a whole. Argyle (1999) found that people help other people to improve their status and skills. A possible explanation for this might be that students want to build up the status of their fellow students, so as to create a better learning environment at the institution.

The eighth sub-theme of intrinsic rewards is to raise issues. The study participants claim that they participate in voice-related citizenship behaviour to raise awareness of issues that, in their view, are harming the institute's performance. The UOSJP administration should take actions to address this issue. Morrison (2011) notes that there are three major dimensions of voice definition, it should be expressive, it should be discretionary and it must be backed by the positive motive of wanting to enhance the efficiency of individuals and the institution as a whole. This finding confirms the association between voice-related SCB and the intrinsic rewards gained by raising issues.

The ninth intrinsic rewards sub-theme is to pay them back. The study participants claim that whenever they organise an event, they receive support from staff, faculty members and the institution, showing their positive behaviour towards them as a way to pay them back. In addition, students distribute acknowledgement certificates among staff and faculty members for their support at events held by the students. Perugini *et al.* (2003) note that when an individual acquires benefit from someone, he/she feels obliged to do something for that individual, to pay them back. These results match those observed in earlier studies, that the services that students receive from faculty members and staff compels the students to acknowledge these services.

4.2. Extrinsic Rewards

Extrinsic rewards refer to those rewards which students expect from others for their positive input. The first sub-theme of extrinsic rewards is that there is 'no such thing as a free lunch'. The study participants certainly claim that, in Pakistani society, there is no 'free lunch', as it functions on the basis of give and take. Until you do a favour to or support another, they will not give any support to you, even when providing such support may be part of their official job.

The Theory of Other Orientation has been used to understand the citizenship behaviour of people (Sparrow *et al.*, 2010), as it explains that individuals often do not use their own consciousness, but decide their actions on the basis of cues observed in the particular social structure (Brewer, 2004). My own results match those observed by Gage and Thapa (2012), being an obligation to help others in the concept of student volunteering. The findings suggest that, in the context of UOSJP, students have some belief or observation that there is no 'free lunch' and that they are making their decisions based on cues from their social structure.

The second sub-theme of extrinsic rewards is impression management. This study has found that students will show positive behaviour in front of particular co-students, faculty members and staff in order to create an improved positive self-image. The study participants believe that their positive self-image will help them when their teacher checks their transcripts, when they undertake any work with staff members, and when

they ask for help from co-students. However, the participants also state that the behaviour of these students suddenly turns around when they are out of sight of that particular co-student, staff or faculty member. The participants admitted that such opportunistic attitudes enabled some students to obtain some benefits.

Fandt and Ferris (1990) discuss impression management tactics with reference to OCB. Bolino *et al.* (2004) note that workers may exhibit positive behaviour in front of their immediate manager in order to create a positive impression. Hui *et al.* (2000) state that they found a huge difference between pre- and post-promotion behaviour in staff members, showing more positive behaviour before their promotion. In organisations where the actions of staff are widely judged by the manager, impression building does matter (Bolino *et al.*, 2013). My own results thus match those observed from earlier studies in a business context, that individuals show supporting behaviour just to build up their positive self-image in order to gain some benefit. It seems that some students might perform supporting behaviour to project a positive impression of themselves for personal benefit.

The third sub-theme of extrinsic rewards is to make co-students thankful. The study participants state that students express a helping tendency towards co-students in order to make them thankful and also obedient. A possible explanation for this might be that students believe that if they distribute any reward (in the shape of support) to co-students, they will in return receive gratitude from them. This finding corroborates the ideas of Bolino *et al.* (2004), who suggest that it is not necessary that citizenship behaviour is always backed by positive intention; there could be 'dark' motives that incline people to participate in such behaviour.

The fourth sub-theme is to avoid negative consequences. The study participants claim that faculty members and staff are in a powerful role due to their official position and thus it becomes compulsory to show citizenship behaviour towards them. They further reveal that, at least if they cannot get any benefit from staff and faculty members, they may be safe from their negative decisions. A meta-analysis conducted by Fischer and Smith (2003) shows that the person who is not a recipient of the reward, but is an allocator of rewards, will allocate rewards based on equity. Gage and Thapa (2012) report that, in volunteerism research, students involved in voluntary activities protect themselves from personal problems. A possible explanation for this might be that students also consider that their actions will decide the outcome, which is why they want to develop a peaceful relationship with the resource allocator.

The fifth sub-theme of extrinsic rewards is to gain VIP treatment, which is a 'dark' reward (Bolino *et al.*, 2004). The study participants claim that students show citizenship behaviour to staff and faculty members in order to gain VIP treatment. Lee (2008) reports that favouritism is a behaviour in which one person gives favour in order to gain favour unfairly in return. He further states that in favouritism, only receivers are advantaged. However, favouritism is not good for other individuals nor the organisation as a whole. This result may be explained by the fact that, at UOSJP, the study participants claim that in return for their positive behaviour they receive preferential treatment from staff and faculty members.

The sixth sub-theme of extrinsic rewards is to get good grades and extra support, which again is a 'dark' reward (Bolino *et al.*, 2004). The study participants claim that when they show supporting behaviour to teachers, they receive extra academic support and obtain good grades. It seems that, on some occasions, students observe citizenship pressures (Bolino *et al.*, 2013) to display supporting behaviour.

The seventh sub-theme of extrinsic rewards is to gain future employment, again a 'dark' reward. The study participants claim that if they support a faculty member, staff or the institution, then they may gain a job at the university in the future as, in the recruitment process, the recommendations of senior teachers or staff matter. However, Stamper and van Dyne (2001), from a survey of 257 service workers, report that non-permanent employees in America do not exhibit more citizenship behaviours than permanent employees. Interesting though, Van Dyne and Ang (1998), in the Asian context, found that non-permanent employees do show enhanced citizenship behaviour.

“In the workplace, employee decisions to engage in certain forms of OCB may also be driven by instrumental, career-related reasons. For example, attending community events not only helps the company image but also provides an occasion for the employee to develop contacts instrumental in generating future business or employment opportunities” (Lavelle, 2010:920).

It seems that students want a permanent job at the university and that desire inclines them to participate in citizenship behaviour.

The eighth sub-theme of extrinsic rewards is to develop identity. The study participants claim that they participate in various types of citizenship behaviour with co-students, staff and faculty members to develop their identity. This finding corroborates the findings of Vey (2003), who also identifies the links between identity, reward and pro-social behaviour.

The ninth sub-theme of extrinsic reward is to show superiority. The study participants discussed how students help others just show that they are more competent than that student, or to prove another student as being less competent. This finding corroborates the ideas of Bolino *et al.* (2004), who discuss several dark motives for OCB in the business context.

5. Conclusion

Previous research related to SCB (in particular, Chen and Carey, 2009; Zettler, 2011; Annuar Khalid *et al.*, 2013; Myers *et al.*, 2015a) reporting that self-control, religiosity, intrinsic motivation, class climate and social structures are contributing factors for SCB within the various contexts. However, this study identifies intrinsic and extrinsic rewards as antecedents of SCB. The use of negative rewards has emerged as a vital role player in SCB, which is not beneficial for both the institution and students. A reasonable approach to tackle this issue could be by the introduction of some additional marks for good behaviour and the implementation of a written code of conduct for students, staff, faculty members and the institution, so they could not offer such negative rewards to the students in the future. Merit and increased transparency in assessments and appointments would build up the faith of the students in the system, and they would not have to show SCB to avoid otherwise receiving negative rewards

Researchers (in particular, Podsakoff *et al.*, 1993; Van Dyne *et al.*, 1995; Bolino *et al.*, 2004; Bolino *et al.*, 2013) state, with reference to OCB in the business context, that an employee could express OCB due to rewards that are only beneficial for that employee and not for the organisation. This current study found various dark rewards that incline students to participate in citizenship behaviour within the context of Pakistani higher education. The results also indicate that various dark rewards may be beneficial for the students in question, but not for the institution as a whole.

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