The Antecedents of Organizational Citizenship Behavior: A Conceptual Framework

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	The main purpose of this paper was to develop a conceptual model of the antecedents of organizational citizenship behavior among public administrators in Malaysian Public service organizations. The current research was performed by reviewing a considerable amount of past studies on organizational citizenship behavior. Hence, several keywords were identified to conduct the literature review. In the case of this study, the necessary and relevant supporting materials were obtained using electronic databases available at the university's library databases which include Web of Science, SAGE, Emerald, EBSCOHost, and Science Direct. In the reviews, two potential groups of antecedents managed to be found for organizational citizenship behavior from various settings which are individual-related factors and organizational-related factors. Moreover, this paper established self-efficacy as a mediating variable between the two potential groups of antecedents and organizational citizenship behavior. In regard to this, suggestions were identified for future research to provide a more definitive theoretical statement of organizational citizenship behavior as well as develop an additional proposition that can possibly be developed from a more advanced theory.

1. Introduction

Organizational citizenship behaviour is one of the most popular topics that has attracted considerable attention and interests from researchers and practitioners [1,2]. In addition, organizational citizenship behaviour is derived from the premises of contributions that do not adhere to the informal role obligations, which goes beyond and above those formally prescribed by organizational role [3].

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However, Rafeie [4] highlighted that organizational citizenship behaviour has been largely overlooked by researchers, thus explaining the limited understanding of the issues in regard to citizenship behaviour within the public sector. Consequently, this has made it difficult to recognize an effective way to encourage citizenship behaviour in organizations. Hence, there is a lack of empirical evidence on the predictors of organizational citizenship behaviour among public administrator, specifically in the Malaysian public sector. Therefore, it is recommended for public sector to establish imperative actions with the purpose of improving the citizenship behaviour in organisations, particularly in the context of public sector.

Generally, Malaysia public service holds the crucial role as an administrator with the responsibility of facilitating government organizations. In a similar vein, public service was built on the foundation of good governance, ethics, and integrity with the aim of achieving harmonious ecosystem as well as an inclusive, diverse, and sustainable environment [5]. Hence, public administrator plays a vital role in developing and implementing policies and procedure that can improve the work practices in Malaysian public service organizations. In regard to this matter, it should be noted that this is one of the signs that calls for an effort to establish an understanding, and at the same time attempting to examine issues that are related to organizational citizenship behaviour among employees in the context of public service.

In fact, organizational citizenship behaviour has been considered as one of the most important factors that influence organizational productivity and performance [6,7]. Hence, it is safe to indicate that, operations can be efficiently managed, and higher quality service can be delivered [8]. More importantly, this shows that the outcomes resulted by citizenship behaviours can be positive in terms of providing better services that are more efficient and effective [9]. Therefore, this emphasizes the importance of citizenship behaviour within the organization.

Apart from that, the present study also managed to identify that most of the established studied have studied the antecedents of citizenship behaviours from both philosophical perspectives and managerial perspectives. In addition, the limited amount of research performed on organizational citizenship behaviour including self-efficacy as mediating variable further proves the need to adopt additional descriptive and predictive approach on social science studies for the purpose of answering the fundamental questions such as "what are the antecedents of organizational citizenship behaviour?" and "does self-efficacy mediates the relationship between antecedents and organizational citizenship behaviour?".

Additionally, organizational citizenship behaviour is deemed important in enhancing and polishing governmental effectiveness considering that it can ensure bureaucratic operations to be effectively managed and provide a better quality service delivery [10]. The existence of citizenship behaviour among public sector employees plays a crucial role in contributing significant key factors to achieve one of the country's goal which is to become a fully developed nation by the year 2020 [11]. This further supports the notion that employees who are involved in important position are prone to engage in extra-role behaviour [12]. Hence, it is important to understand the predictors of citizenship behaviour due to the impact of citizenship behaviour in Malaysian public sector.

Public administrators are responsible in managing public service organizations with the purpose of providing better services to the citizen. However, the public sector has been continuously criticized for the bureaucratic, inefficient, wasteful, and unresponsive delivery services [10]. This is clearly shown in the report of Public Complaint Bureau which presents the higher numbers of complaints received by the government ministries [13]. The types of complaint reported by the Public Complaint Bureau (13) include delay or no action, unsatisfactory quality of service, misconduct and failure to follow the set procedure.

Apart from that, absenteeism, low performance, ineffective service delivery, and not committed are among the various forms of issues in public sector that have been frequently reported in the media [14-16]. Therefore, this is against the notion that employees in public sector is altruistic and pro-socially oriented, committed citizens, and able to work beyond contractual obligations [17].

In regard to this matter, the government is actively implementing several efforts in improving existing policy to encourage employee's behaviour as well as improving their service delivery by introducing some strategies to enhance the quality of public sector. On top of that, few programs have been implemented to achieve the strategic reform initiatives (SRIs) which is one of the objectives under the Government Transformation Program (GTP) and New Economic Model (NEM). Nevertheless, citizenship behaviour among public administrator has become an important issues in the Malaysian public service organisations despite the implementation of various programs (18). Therefore, it is very important to show more appreciation towards public employee's citizenship behaviours because it is believed to prevent the loss of citizen's trust that may have promoted negative outcomes for government organizations.

The current paper also aims to develop a conceptual framework that can measure citizenship behaviour among public administrators in Malaysian public service organizations. More importantly, the present study intends to make two major contributions to both theoretical and managerial perspective. First, theoretically, this study offers an extension of Conservation of Resource theory [19] on the individual-related factors (i.e. work-family conflict and family-work conflict) and organization-related factors (i.e. supervisor support) that are related to organizational citizenship behaviour through the mediating effect of self-efficacy.

Second, in terms of managerial perspective, this study add to the body of knowledge by providing more information regarding the Malaysian public service context as well as clarify the organizational citizenship behaviour in collectivistic cultures such as Malaysia [20,21]. In fact, the term "one size fit all" does not relevant for cultures across nations; hence, the practices developed in the Western cultures seems not suitable to be adopted because it may be different in other countries [22].

The present study contributes to the Hobfoll's [19] Conservation of Resource theory by integrating variables such as organizational-related and individual-related variable with the purpose of providing better justification for the interactions between all variables involved in this study. In regard to this matter, self-efficacy were found to be a significant predictor of various types of organizational citizenship behaviour [23-27]. Therefore, it is considered as the best decision to employ self-efficacy as the mediating variable in this study.

Moreover, a considerable amount of research has concluded that employees who are more efficacious tend to be more motivated to engage themselves with citizenship behaviours. Nevertheless, some researchers have included self-efficacy as mediating variable, but the focus was more on other criterion variables such as knowledge characteristics [25], ethical leadership [28], and job performance [29]. Additionally, most published studies on organizational citizenship behaviour have only focused on academic institution [18,30-32], private sector [33-36], and public services [37-39]. Hence, this further explains the, lack of empirical evidence in public sector, particularly in Malaysian government organizations.

The current paper begins by reviewing the antecedents of organizational citizenship behaviour. Next, the paper continues by describing the conservation of resource (COR) theory which acts as the underpinning theory that are responsible in deriving the predictors and mediator of organizational citizenship behaviour. Meanwhile, the antecedents will be explained with the associations of organizational citizenship behaviour. The development of this paper then involves the introduction of self-efficacy as the mediating variable, and finally, the development of the conceptual framework for organizational citizenship behaviour.

As had been noted, the reviews are performed based on published literature on organizational citizenship behaviour which are identified based on several keywords such as "organizational citizenship behaviour", "work-family conflict", "Malaysian public sector", and "Conservation of Resource theory". Apart from that, a few electronic databases are utilized in this study for the purpose of searching for the literature which can be found in university's library databases such as Web of Science, Emerald, Science Direct, JStor, EBSCOHost, ProQuest, Springer, and SAGE.

2. Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)

According to Organ [40], organizational citizenship behaviour defined as "individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by formal rewards system" and results in promotes organizational effectiveness. Originally, organizational citizenship behaviour were categorized into two, namely - altruism and general compliance [41]. In particular, altruism can be described as helping behaviour directed to individual, while general compliance refers to a helping behaviour directed to organization.

However, Organ [40] then broaden the concept of organizational citizenship behaviour with additional dimensions that include courtesy, sportsmanship, and civic virtue. Courtesy refers to behaviour of individuals that aims at preventing work-related problems with other co-workers [42]. Next, sportsmanship is described as the willingness of individuals to tolerate with any given circumstances without complaining, and at the same time able to refrain themselves from activities that involve complaining and grievances. On another note, civic virtue refers to active participation and interest in the life of the organization [43]. In the study of Norasherin *et al.*, [44], the term organizational citizenship behaviour is perceived to be highly valued and critical due to its ability to enhance organizations' service delivery. In a similar vein, organizational citizenship behaviour can influence organizational productivity and improve its performance [6,7].

In addition, it should be noted that organizational citizenship behaviour has been widely studied under different terminologies such as civic organizational behaviour [45], extra-role behaviour [46], contextual performance [47], perceived organizational membership [48], and compulsory citizenship behaviour [49]. Hence, it can be concluded that various concepts of organizational citizenship behaviour tend to result in the inconclusive definition of this construct. On top of that, Williams and Anderson [50] further categorized organizational citizenship behaviour into individuals or organizations by respectively representing them as OCBI and OCBO.

Additionally, an established research emphasized that organizational citizenship behaviour is often unrecognized and unnoticed [51]. Meanwhile, Sharma, *et al.*, [52] assumed that organizational citizenship behaviour is higher in public sector organizations compared to private organizations. On another note, a review of literature found a lack of consensus on the scope of organizational citizenship behaviour [53,54]. Hence, it can be concluded that organizational citizenship behaviour is one of the prominent topics of research due to the fact that the construct is closely associated with employees productivity and organizational performance [55,56].

As has been previously mentioned, the present study had chosen to focus on the antecedents of citizenship behaviour. In this case, the organizational citizenship behaviour is operationalized as positive behaviour in the workplace that are not formally rewarded by the organization but carried out based on the discretion of the employee [57].

3. Theorizing Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

This study incorporates Conservation of Resource theory to support the research framework developed for this research because this theory was also intensively employed by most of the empirical studies on organizational citizenship behaviour.

3.1 Conservation of Resource (COR) Theory

COR theory developed by Hobfoll [58] postulates that "individuals are motivated to obtain, retain, foster, and protect valuable resources by preventing them from any loss" [19]. In this context, resources refers to individual perceived anything useful that help them to attain goals [59]. According to COR theory developed by Hobfoll [19], individual will try to retain, protect, and obtain useful resources due to the limited amount of resources. In this case, it should be understood that resources are items that have intrinsic or instrumental value which include objects, conditions, personal characteristics, and energies.

For instance, some researchers such as Karam [1] and Liu *et al.*, [60] have employed Conservation of Resource theory in order to explain the phenomenon of citizenship behaviour. As suggested by Hobfoll [58], conservation of resource theory requires individuals to gather as many resources as possible.

Hence, this study has decided to include several antecedent variables which individual factors are as well as organizational factor such as work-family conflict, family-work conflict, and supervisor support. The purpose of choosing these variables was based on the fact that they are related to employee's behaviours and attitude that can be significantly related to the resources within the organization and employees.

3.2 Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory that was first introduced by Blau [61] defines relationships or "social associations" as "an exchange of activity, tangible or intangible and more or less rewarding or costly between at least two persons". In other words, it can be described as voluntary, beneficial actions that involve exchanges between individuals with the expectation of receiving something in return from the other. The example of beneficial actions include assistance, advice, compliance, appreciation, and instrumental services [62]. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the principle of reciprocity in social exchange relationship entails the discretionary cooperative behaviour and do not involve explicit bargaining of prior specification [63].

Previously, researchers such as Wang [64] and Chiaburu *et al.*, [65], have incorporated social exchange theory in their studies with the purpose of explaining the phenomenon of organizational citizenship behaviour. Meanwhile, Yadav and Rangnekar [54] suggested that social exchange involves reciprocate interactions of an individual with other individuals and organizations. For instance, support received from supervisor is reciprocated with the willingness to be involved in extra-role activity such as citizenship behaviour [66]. In this case, it is believed that employees will positively evaluate supervisor's action, and in return, they will be willing to engage in citizenship behaviour [67]. Overall, it is safe to conclude that employees who have a better exchange relationship with the supervisors in terms of support are more likely to engage in citizenship behaviour.

In relation to this matter, the present study has decided to include organizational factor which is the supervisor support as the antecedent of citizenship behaviour considering that it is an important component in organizational support that is significantly related to the exchange of relationship

within organizations [68,69]. Consequently, this is believed to affect individuals' behaviours and attitudes.

4. Predictors of Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

The selection of variables in this study were based on the review of the previous theoretical and empirical evidences. On the other hand, the framework of this study was developed based on two groups of factors, namely individual-factors and organizational-factors. Specifically, the individual-factors include work-family conflict and family-work conflict, while the organizational-factors comprise of supervisor support in organizations.

4.1 Individual-Factors

Most of the previous empirical studies have concluded that individual differences are likely to generate prediction of organizational citizenship behaviour [26]. Hence, this notion had led to the various individual-factors that are relevant in predicting organizational citizenship behaviour. However, the present study had chosen to limit its focus to two individual-factors, namely work-family conflict and family-work conflict because they are most likely to influence individuals' organizational citizenship behaviour in the organization [53, 70-72].

4.1.1 Work-family conflict and organizational citizenship behaviour

Work-family conflict indicates the interference of the family role by virtue of participation in the work role [73]. In a more specific manner, individuals with work-family conflict are more likely to perceive something negatively, thus they will end up avoiding extra-role behaviour. In addition, individuals who are faced with high work-family conflict have to seriously juggle between workloads and family responsibilities; hence, this may result in dearth of resources that will make it difficult to engage in citizenship behaviour [74,75].

On a similar note, O'loughlin [76] also revealed that individual with high work-family conflict are more likely to have lower citizenship behaviour. Hence, the present study chose work-family conflict as the potential variable in predicting organizational citizenship behaviour based on the suggestion of Organ [40] in his seminal book on organizational citizenship behaviour which states that work-family conflict may have an even stronger impact on organizational citizenship behaviour compared to in-role job performance [53]. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed based on the assumption that work-family conflict will contribute a significant impact to organizational citizenship behaviour:

H1: There is a negative significant relationship between work-family conflict and organizational citizenship behaviour among public administrators.

4.1.2 Family-work conflict and organizational citizenship behaviour

In relation to this, family-work conflict is another individual-factor that has shown to be relevant in influencing employees' organizational citizenship behaviour [22]. In addition, earlier studies conceptualized work-family conflict as an unidirectional construct [77]. On the other hand, later research further distinguished work-family conflict into two bidirectional approaches [78-80].

According to Aazami *et al.*, [81], work-family conflict and family-work conflict need to be assessed separately because both constructs may have a unique set of consequences.

On top of that, Beham [53] noted that individuals with high family-work conflict will perceive the organization to be the cause of the conflict, thus will decrease their effort to be involved in citizenship behaviour. In response to this, Wang *et al.*, [22] further highlighted that individuals with higher family-work conflict are more likely to stringently restrict their organizational citizenship behaviour. On the other hand, individuals with low family-work conflict are capable of managing their family responsibilities, thus they will have no problem to be involved in citizenship behaviour [53]. Therefore, the present study proposes the following hypothesis considering that individuals with high family-work conflict are more likely to have lower organizational citizenship behaviour compared to those with low family-work conflict:

H2: There is no significant relationship between family-work conflict and organizational citizenship behaviour among public administrators.

4.2 Organizational-Factor

Most of the established studies argued that there are organizational factors that are capable of influencing employee's organizational citizenship behaviour [82]. According to the Conservation of Resource theory, individuals in organizations are more likely to be involved in citizenship behaviour when they receive full support from their superior. Moreover, support in the form of resources is able to provide empowerment for individuals to participate in organizational citizenship behaviour [54]. Therefore, the present study had chosen supervisor support as the organizational-factor in order to describe individual's citizenship behaviour.

4.2.1 Supervisor support and organizational citizenship behaviour

The purpose of choosing supervisory support as one of the organizational variables in this study was because it plays an important role at the workplace. On top of that, it has also been shown that support from the supervisor will produce positive impact towards employees' attitudes at the workplace [69]. Apart from that, supervisory support has become an important element for organizations to boost their performance as well as increase the involvement in organizational citizenship behaviour [54].

More importantly, it is considered as a generic form of support that provides socio-emotional resource in dealing with work demands [83]. Hence, it is expected that individuals will show high level of identification, compliance, and gratitude that can increase organizational citizenship behaviour [84].

A great deal of previous research reported that supervisor support is related to employees' organizational citizenship behaviour [54,64,67]. An empirical study conducted among 238 employees in China by Wang [64] showed that there is a positive relationship between supervisor support and organizational citizenship behaviour. Hence, it is also believed that support from supervisor are able to empower employees by leading them towards better organizational citizenship behaviour [54]. Overall, the more support receives by individuals from their supervisors, the more they will engage in organizational citizenship behaviour. Therefore, it could conceivably be hypothesized that:

H3: There is a positive significant relationship between supervisor support and organizational citizenship behaviour among public administrators.

4.3 Self-Efficacy as Mediating Variable

In this study, self-efficacy was proposed as a mediating variable between the three-independent variables and the dependent variable. Self-efficacy is reflected as a belief possessed by individuals in regard to their capacity in organizing and executing the courses of action required to produce the desired outcomes [85]. Self-efficacy is also the result of self-mechanisms which suggests that individuals need to be in control of their own behaviour [86]. One of the empirical studies has suggested the need to examine the importance of self-efficacy as personal coping resources due to the fact that coping figures such as self-efficacy is the least common studied predictors and there is little published data on the effects of multiple roles. Likewise, there is a number of studies that suggested individuals self-efficacy as an important resource in preventing the stress of multiple roles [87].

Glaser *et al.*, [88] emphasized that influence of conflict between work and family on individuals will lead to lower self-efficacy and lower involvement of organizational citizenship behaviour. Apart from that, stress caused by conflict has been highlighted to affect self-efficacy and decrease the citizenship behaviour among employees. It is important to note that negative situation (i.e. conflict) is resulted by the need to juggle the responsibilities between work and family, and this could be identified as a source of depleted resources [89,90]. For example, employees are likely to avoid from performing extra-role such as organizational citizenship behaviour, especially when their resources are declined due to conflict.

A search of the literature have identified that employees with conflict between work and family are more likely to feel unconfident with their capabilities to perform extra-role task [87]. On another note, Wang [64] identified that support from supervisors is also one of the reasons that can encourage employees to perform citizenship behaviour as a form of recognition, especially when their contribution as employees is highly valued by the organizations.

Hence, this is a form of conservation of resource theory relationship, thus the adoption of this theory can enhance the understanding on the reason of why employees perform citizenship behaviour. Therefore, the current research incorporated self-efficacy as a mediator of the relationship between individual (work-family conflict) and organizational factors (supervisor support) as well as organizational citizenship behaviours. Therefore, it is possible to hypothesize that:

H4: Self-efficacy mediates the relationship between individual-related factors (work-family conflict and family-work conflict) and organizational-related factors (supervisor support) as well as organizational citizenship behaviour among public administrators.

5. Conceptual Framework

The previous discussion has led to the development of the conceptual framework for the purpose of measuring organizational citizenship behaviour among public administrators in Malaysian public service organizations (Figure 1).
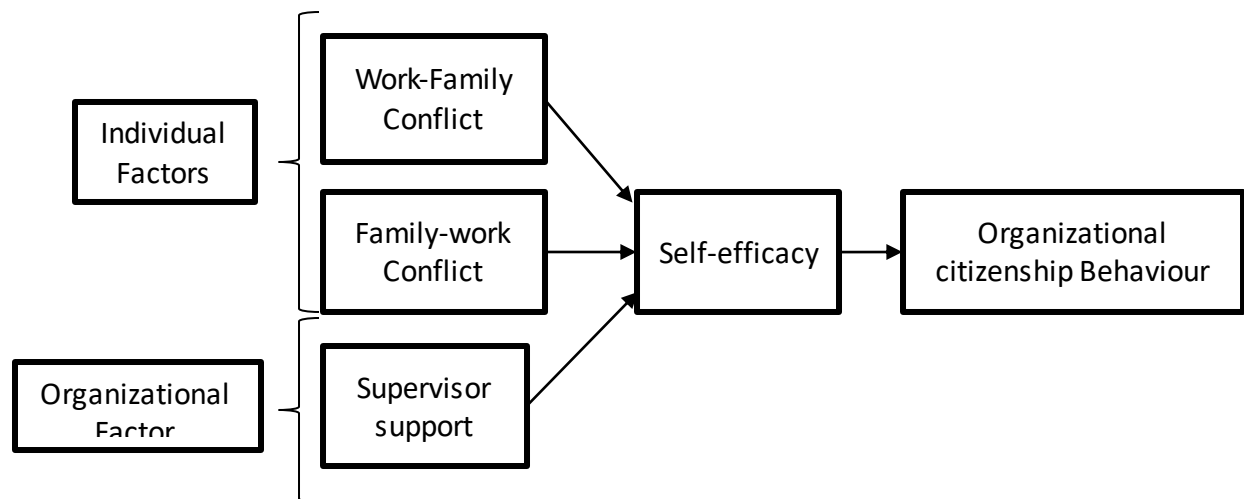
Fig. 1. Conceptual framework

6. Conclusions

The present study set out to describe the relevant studies from a considerable amount of literature in regard to organizational citizenship behaviour and its antecedents. On top of that, there remains a paucity of evidence in understanding the factors that influence extra-role behaviour [91]. The aim of the present research was to explore three key antecedents, namely work-family conflict, family-work conflict, and supervisor support that play an important role in predicting citizenship behaviour as well as self-efficacy as the mediating variable (see Figure 1). In relation to this, a proposition was put forward to test the relationship. Apart from that, the current paper also provides a conceptual framework for the purpose of providing an opportunity to scholars and practitioners in exploring the framework in order to further explain the relationship between individual and organizational factor in regard to citizenship behaviour.

In addition, the importance of self-efficacy as a mediating variable was highlighted in this study based on the suggestion of Tsui-Hsu Tsai *et al*., [92] that emphasizes the need to include self-efficacy as a mediator variable in citizenship behavioural studies. Hence, the Conservation of Resource theory were employed as the underpinning theory of this study in order to support the propositions. In terms of theoretical contribution, this study managed to extend the literature on citizenship behaviour by integrating other antecedent's variables such as work-family conflict and family-work conflict as the individual factors, while supervisor support is considered as the organizational factor.

Besides, this study also contributed to the managerial perspective by further suggesting some practical ways that can be implemented by public sector organizations in assisting employees and organizations to improve employees' citizenship behaviour. More importantly, public sector plays an important role in providing a conducive environment and proactive work culture among public administrators in organizations [5].

In summary, organizational citizenship behaviour has shown to bring significant impacts on employee's performance, attitude, and behaviour. In relation to this matter, public sector organizations will be able to understand and develop appropriate policies and strategies by further examining the nature of citizenship behaviour within the organizations and its antecedents which is believe to improve employees and organizational performance.

Hopefully, the current paper would be very useful in attracting more scholarly attention in conducting more individual- and organizational-related studies that can further contribute to the new dimensions of organizational behaviour. Finally, the knowledge on this issue can be enhanced

considering that the information provided by this study can act as a stepping stone in conducting further work that is relevant to this field.

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