The Effect of Citizenship Behavior on Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty

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ABSTRACT: This study examined the relationship between citizenship behavior of Alzahra University staff with Alzahra university students’ satisfaction and loyalty. In this study, the questionnaire is designed after describing various aspects of citizenship. Five-item Likert questionnaire, which is one of the most common measures of comparison, was used. The first questionnaire was distributed among the staff and the other was distributed among students. In order to examine validity of questionnaire the content method was used. For this purpose, opinions of relevant experts and professors were used, and after determining its validity and application of multiple viewpoints and revisions the content validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by experts. To analyze data Lisrel 8.80, SPSS19, and Excel 2007 were used. In this study, it was concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between citizenship behavior of Alzahra University staff and perceived service quality from students of this university and therefore their satisfaction and loyalty. Regarding the impact of this relationship it is suggested to directors and presidents of Alzahra University to help improvement and development of such attitudes that is one way to enhance the effectiveness of organization.

Keywords: citizenship behavior, customer loyalty, customer satisfaction, service quality

INTRODUCTION

The totally changing conditions, increased competition and the need for effectiveness of organization in such conditions have increasingly revealed their need to a valuable generation of staff. A generation referred as corporate soldiers. Undoubtedly these employees are distinction of effective organizations from non-effective ones, since they operate more than their official role without any expectations and hesitate no efforts (Tabarsa Varamin Mehr, 2010). Researchers concede great importance to ultra-role performance impact on organizational effectiveness. One of the most common conceptualizations and operational makings has been conducted on ultra-role behaviors and organizational citizenship behaviors (Betman and Organ, 1993; Organ, 1988).

The concept of organizational citizenship behavior was first presented to world of science in the early 1980s by Betman and Organ. Preliminary investigations, which were conducted on organizational citizenship behavior, were more to identify responsibilities or behaviors that employees had in organization, but they were often neglected. However, these behaviors in traditional evaluations of job performance were measured incompletely or even sometimes were neglected; they were effective in improving organizational effectiveness (Mostabser & Nejabi, 2008; Rezaei Kelidbary & Baqery Salimi, 2008; Islami, 2008). Bolino and Turnley (2003) believe that citizenship behaviors generally consist of two components: First that they are not able to be reinforced directly (for example, they do not need to be a part of people's job from technical aspects); second, they are the result of extraordinary efforts that organizations expect from their employees in order to achieve success (Bolino and Turnley, 2003). Several studies have been done on the factors influencing organizational citizenship behaviors. Generally two important factors in occurrence of these behaviors are attitudes and personality of staff. Different researchers have presented various models for citizenship behaviors, among which the citizenship behavior models of Graham, Netmeyer, Podsakoff and other models can be noted. Among the presented models, this study has used Podsakoff citizenship behavior model, therefore its aspects are mentioned briefly:

Helpful behaviors: Helpful behaviors include helping the others voluntarily or preventing from work-related problems. The first part of this definition consists of three aspects including altruism, mediation, and encouragement, which were introduced by Organ. The concept of interpersonal helps presented by Graham, Williams, & Anderson, the concept of interpersonal facilitation by Van Scotter and Motovildo, and the concept of helping the others by Geork, Brief, and Jones are all representing this kind of behaviors. The second part of this definition describes helping the others in form of preventing from work-related problems (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, pain and bacharch, 2000; vigoda 2000).
Magnanimity and forgiveness: Organ defined magnanimity and forgiveness as willingness to tolerate the inevitable uncomfortable situations without complaint and expressing discomfort (Castro, Armario and Ruiz, 2004). Magnanimity and forgiveness can be defined as staff goodwill in tolerating situation that is not ideal without complaint (Ryan, 2002; Schapp, 1998).

Organizational loyalty: consists of the concept of expanding goodwill and organization support by Geork and the concept of advocating, supporting and defending organizational objectives by Borman and Motovildo. Organizational loyalty is essential because of organization position for people outside the organization. Protection and defense against external threats and maintaining commitments in adverse conditions can be seen as loyalty (Podsakoff et al, 2000).

Organizational obedience: the concept of following organizational rules and procedures expressed by Motovildo and Borman show this structure, resulting in internalization and adoption of organizational rules, regulations and procedures, even in the absence of supervision. Thus the employees who obey conscientiously all the rules and instructions, even in the absence of monitoring are considered as good citizens (Podsakoff et al, 2000).

Personal initiative: this type of OCB is ultra-role behavior, which is beyond the least general expected requirements (Schapp, 1998). Examples of such behaviors include voluntary creative activities and innovative designs to promote personal responsibility and organizational performance. Motovildo and Borman defined doing task activities voluntarily and eagerly as components of this structure (Podsakoff et al, 2000).

Civil behavior: Civil behavior is a macro-level of interest or commitment to the organization as a whole (Pod sakoff et al, 1994). Monitoring environment to identify opportunities and threats, even with personal expenses, is an example of these behaviors. This behavior reflects the individual's recognition of the fact that he is part of a larger whole (Greenberg, Robert, Baron, 2000). Civil behavior is defined as a behavior that indicates participation in corporate life (Wech, 2002).

Self development: Personal development consists of employees' voluntary actions to improve their knowledge, skills and capabilities. The characteristic of such behavior is that learning a new set of skills in order to develop participation domain takes place inside the organization (Podsakoff et al, 1990; Podsakoff, Mackenzie, 1994).

Yoon and Suh (2003) founded that organizational behavior of employees is the most important and affecting factor in creating and perceiving service quality by customers. In fact, it is the activity of employees inside an organization that connects the organization with customers. The purpose of these activities is to maintain customer loyalty by fulfilling their needs. Therefore, to ensure the success in creating perfect quality services, employees have key importance, because ultimately they are responsible for providing services and meeting customer expectations (Castro and et al, 2004). In service firms, behavioral performance of staff providing services will form an important part of the quality service that the customer perceives. In view of relationship marketing, employee-customer engagement is also very important. Morgan and Hunt (1994) identified the importance of social context, such as trust and commitment. Pulin (1999-2000) emphasized that corporate-customer relationship in long-term lead to profitability, and argued that in communication services the customer evaluation largely depends on abilities, techniques and experiences of staff in communicating with customer. In service organizations, service staff behavior with customers may affect future relationships with costumer (Binenstock et al, 2003). Another point is that in fact service is a kind of performance, and therefore service quality compared to tangible products mainly depends on the performance of employees in contact with customers (Yoon and Suh, 2003). In previous research on quality of service, the relation of official and inter-role behaviors of staff and perceived service quality are considered. While in addition to these behaviors, voluntary and ultra-role behaviors such as organizational citizenship behavior are also likely to have a significant impact on customer evaluation of service quality. The relationship between citizenship behavior and organizational performance is often evaluated at the conceptual level. While a number of early researchers of organizational citizenship behavior believe that sufficient empirical research has not been conducted on relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and performance (Bell and Menguc, 2002; Pod sakoff and Mackenzie, 1997). So, specifying the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and service quality, which is a kind of performance, has been done on this basis and few studies. Some reasons can be cited to support the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and service quality: First, organizational citizenship behavior has a positive direct impact on the relationship between employees and customers and improves customers' perceptions of service quality. Employees that show organizational citizenship behaviors are able to improve service quality, because they attempt to help others including customers in the best way (Castro and et al., 2004). Another reason is the impact of organizational citizenship behavior on internal aspect of organization, which indirectly improves service quality, and increases organizational citizenship behavior (Pod sakoff and Mackenzie, 1997) and productivity of employee and working groups, encourages teamwork, enhances communication, cooperation and staff assistance to each other, decreases the error rate, and promotes participation and involvement of employees in the organization.
The employees, who perceive working environment positively, are more likely to be customer oriented (Winsted, 2000). So, organizational citizenship behavior affecting internal organizational factors such as service atmosphere, the working environment, staff maintenance and etc will lead to a perfect service quality provided to customers by staff. Further, customer evaluation of service quality is an important factor in achieving organizational effectiveness. Thus, the reason of great interest of researchers to organizational citizenship behavior is based on this assumption that OCB by affecting the service quality leads to organizational effectiveness (Yoon, Suh, 2003). Based on the above, three aspects of organizational citizenship behavior (altruism, civic behavior and magnanimity) have been studied to explain the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and service quality. Altruism is essential to ensure desired service quality. In fact, service quality is the result of the interaction of customer-staff in delivery of services. Therefore, citizenship behavior provides opportunities for employees to achieve experiences that other employees have had in dealing with customers (Bien stock et al, 2003). An important factor in the continued success of the organizations is their ability to retain existing customers and making them loyal to brand or services of the organization. Loyal customers buy more, spend more money, and are perfect oral advertising tools. Today business demands are more than past and no firm other than the state monopoly organizations can survive without loyal customers. Moreover, with ever-increasing expectations of customers, firms must go beyond the basic needs of the customer and deliver desired goods and services. The organization must build trust in this way, and gain trust in a long-term relationship that will be profitable for both parties. Loyal customers by assisting organizations to forecast the sales and profit streams help to increase organization's revenue, and buy more goods and services as well. Customers who are familiar with the organization brand are likely to tell it to their friends and relatives, and are in feedback and evaluation cycle of the organization product. These factors are important in today's business environment (Sharma and mehro, 2003). In 1999, Richard Oliver says: "Loyalty is a strong commitment to re-buy a superior product or service in the future, so that the same brand or product would be purchased despite potential impacts and marketing efforts of competitors." Most scholars consider loyalty as a kind of positive attitude toward an existing (brand, good or service) and its protectionist behavior that is associated with the following three elements (Sin, leo, tse, yim and Frederick, 2005). 1. Element of customer behavior (repeat purchase), 2- Element of customer attitudes (customer trust and commitment), 3- Element of availability of many options to choose and buy (Lee Kelly, Gilbert and manicom, 2003). On the other hand, loyalty is also classified from the perspective of the relative attitude and repeat purchase behavior (Elahi & Heidari, 2005). In line with mentioned communications and also the importance and fundamental role of universities and institutions of higher education as the highest center of thinking and science production of society with presence and activity of thoughtful thinkers, researchers, scholars and students in order to promote science and form intellectual, religious, cultural and political movements of society, this study attempted to examine the mentioned relationships in Alzahra University considering the following assumptions:

Assumptions

There is a significant positive relationship between organizational citizenship behavior of Alzahra University staff and perceived service quality by the students.

There is a significant positive relationship between organizational citizenship behavior of Alzahra University staff and students’ satisfaction.

There is a significant positive relationship between organizational citizenship behavior of Alzahra University staff and students’ loyalty.

There is a significant positive relationship between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction of Alzahra University.

There is a significant positive relationship between perceived service quality by Alzahra University students and their loyalty.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is functional and the method of data collection is descriptive and correlation. Statistical population includes the staff and students of Alzahra University. In order to determine sample size, 200 students and 200 employees were randomly selected as statistical sample. Required data were distributed through questionnaires and evaluated for the final analysis. It should be noted that the staff questionnaire contained 41 items or questions divided as follows:
In order to assess the validity of the questionnaire, the content method was used. For this purpose, a group of experts and professors associated with research topic were selected from faculty members of Islamic Azad University of Astara and their viewpoints were used for the content validity of the questionnaire. After adopting their viewpoints, which were deliberately to facilitate understanding items by respondents, validity of the research instrument was confirmed. Also, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was calculated using SPSS as shown in table (2):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent variables</th>
<th>N of questions</th>
<th>Alpha coefficient</th>
<th>Dependent variables</th>
<th>N of questions</th>
<th>Alpha coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational obedience</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.726</td>
<td>Helpful behaviors</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational loyalty</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.720</td>
<td>Magnanimity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational participation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.691</td>
<td>Perceived quality</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self development</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.691</td>
<td>Customer satisfaction</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual initiatives</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.738</td>
<td>Customer loyalty</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.601</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Calculated Cronbach’s alpha coefficients indicate good reliability of research questionnaires.

The highest and lowest mean were assigned to service quality and customer loyalty, respectively. In order to test the hypothesis, first Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (parametric (normal distribution) or nonparametric tests (non-normal distribution)) were used. The results are presented in table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Significance level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational citizenship behavior</td>
<td>0.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational obedience</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational loyalty</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational participation</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self development</td>
<td>0.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual initiatives</td>
<td>0.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful behaviors</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnanimity</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service quality</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer satisfaction</td>
<td>0.052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer loyalty</td>
<td>0.034</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be observed, among independent and dependent variables only customer satisfaction follows normal distribution (its significance level is greater than 0.05). Other variables according to their significance level that is less than 0.05 do not follow normal distribution. So since the Pearson correlation (parametric) test
can only be used in assumptions that both variables follow a normal distribution, Spearman correlation (nonparametric) test was used due to non-normal distribution.

**Findings**

In this study, collected data were presented in the form of descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS19 and Lisrel 8.80. The mean values, standard deviation, variance, and frequency were used in descriptive statistics in order to distribute the sample in terms of demographic variables and dimensions of dependent and independent variables, and Pearson and Spearman correlation coefficients and path analysis were used in inferential statistics in order to test the hypotheses.

**Analysis of assumptions**

The results of the analysis of assumptions are as follows

Testing first hypothesis: Due to non-normal distribution of both variables in sample, Spearman correlation coefficient was used to test the hypothesis. In 0.01 of error level, the obtained level of significance (Sig) was less than 0.01. Therefore, $H_0$ is rejected and $H_1$ is accepted. It can be concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between organizational citizenship behavior of Alzahra University staff and perceived service quality by the students. The intensity of this relationship is equal to 0.286, which shows a direct relationship between organizational citizenship behavior of Alzahra University staff and perceived service quality by the students of this university. In comparison with the results of other studies in this field, the research by Kakhaki & Qolipoor (2007), Doae et al. (2009), Hosseini & Qaderi, Beinstock & Demornvilllz can be mentioned. The results of testing this hypothesis is consistent with all the mentioned studies, expect the study by Doae et al. (2009). So that strengthening citizenship behavior, customer satisfaction of service quality can be seen.

Testing second hypothesis: Due to non-normal distribution of citizenship behavior in sample, the Spearman correlation coefficient was used to test this hypothesis. In 0.01 of error level, the obtained level of significance (Sig) was less than 0.01. Therefore, $H_0$ is rejected and $H_1$ is accepted. It can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior of Alzahra University staff and the university students' satisfaction. The intensity of this relationship is equal to 0.285, which shows a direct relationship between organizational citizenship behavior of Alzahra University staff and the university students' satisfaction. The results are consistent with the results of Kakhaki & Qolipoor (2007), Hosseini & Qaderi, and Smith et al.

Testing third hypothesis: Due to non-normal distribution of both variables in sample, Spearman correlation coefficient was used to test the hypothesis. In 0.01 of error level, the obtained level of significance (Sig) was less than 0.01. Therefore, $H_0$ is rejected and $H_1$ is accepted. It can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between organizational citizenship behavior of Alzahra University staff and the university students' loyalty. The intensity of this relationship is equal to 0.213, which shows a direct relationship between organizational citizenship behavior of Alzahra University staff and the university students' loyalty. Kakhaki & Qolipoor (2007), Ameri et al. (2012), and Hao Liu also approved the positive organizational citizenship behavior of Alzahra University staff on customer loyalty.

Fourth hypothesis: Due to non-normal distribution of service quality in sample, Spearman correlation coefficient was used to test the hypothesis. In 0.01 of error level, the obtained level of significance (Sig) was less than 0.01. Therefore, $H_0$ is rejected and $H_1$ is accepted. It can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between perceived service quality and satisfaction of Alzahra University students. The intensity of this relationship is equal to 0.220, which shows a direct relationship between perceived service quality and satisfaction of Alzahra University students. The results are consistent with the results of Lee et al. (2011), Qaffari & Jafari (2012), Yazdanpanah, Samadi, & Eskandari (2010) indicating the significant relationship between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction.

Fifth hypothesis: Testing this hypothesis using the Spearman correlation coefficient in 5% error level and less than 0.05 significance level (Sig) shows that the hypothesis can be accepted with 95% confidence showing there is a significant relationship between perceived service quality by Alzahra University students and their loyalty. These results are consistent with the results of previous studies conducted by Allameh & Noktedan (2009), Ameri et al. (2012), Yazdanpanah, Haoiu (2010), Hak Lee et al. (2011), and Fullerton (2003), since all of them have approved the positive and significant relationship between perceived service quality and customer loyalty. This result also shows that the least positive action in improving service quality would not be ignored by the customer and can cause customer loyalty to the organization.

**Analyzing the generality of the model (overall fit index)**

Three overall classes of fit index of the model including absolute, comparative, and frugal fit index (Qasemi, 2009) obtained from model test are presented in table (5).
Testing the model shows whether empirical data support the developed theoretical model or not. 47.1 ($\chi^2$/df) is also acceptable for relative chi-square index. Similarly, all Normed Fit Index (NFI), Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and Incremental Fit Index (IFI) also show higher values of 90%, which represents a good fit of the model. Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) with values of 0.047 (less than 0.080) indicates acceptability of the model. Also, obtained 90% confidence interval for RMSEA index with lower limit of 0.037 and upper limit of 0.060 is in an acceptable range.

**DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Due to confirmed relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and perceived service quality, the importance of organizational citizenship behavior as a strategy for organizations can be realized. It is recommended to managers and directors of Alzahra University to help improvement and development of such attitudes that is one way to enhance the effectiveness of organization.

Customer satisfaction and loyalty toward a service organization depends significantly on staff associated with customer. Therefore in order to acquire loyal customers, first we should focus on interaction quality i.e. organizational citizenship behavior of our human resource. Skilled, expert, and affable manpower is the first factor to increase satisfaction and loyalty; accordingly managers should reduce the gap between expectations and understandings of customers and gain their satisfaction and loyalty by enhancing job satisfaction in staff and also through in-service courses to enhance employees’ knowledge on provided services and also on how to deal with customers.

Today, manufacturing or service organizations consider customer satisfaction as an important criterion for measuring the quality of their work. The importance of customer and his satisfaction refers to global competition. Customer satisfaction is defined as one’s pleasure or disappointed feeling due to comparing the results with his expectations (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011). Therefore, service quality is the most important factor in increasing the level of customer satisfaction and hence their loyalty. Since in this study, there was a positive and significant relationship between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction and loyalty, it is suggested to Alzahra University staff and managers to pay more attention to provided services, and also to indentify a proper model of loyalty in their organization. Absence of such knowledge may make the service organization choose improper index to measure customer loyalty and not be able to link customer loyalty to performance indicators. Therefore, they would make mistakes in designing loyalty programs and identifying proper behaviors of customers. Thus, they can identify proper index through the establishment of a student exchange idea network and continually assessing their views on their satisfaction with the quality of provided services and trying to use their critical and productive comments.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

It is recommended to use other methods of data collection such as interview in future studies. It is recommended further studies by performing other statistical methods such as Friedman rank and prioritize the components of OCB as well as each component in the sample so that managers and employees could take the best advantage of the results.

It is recommended to examine OCB separately for employees from different units of the organization (level group analysis should be considered).

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