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A Comprehensive Literature Review of Organizational Justice, Organizational Commtiment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior of Private Enterprises

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Abstract: This study investigates the relationship between organizational justice, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in private enterprises, emphasizing their impact on employee performance and organizational success. Drawing on distributive, procedural, and interactional justice, as well as affective, continuance, and normative commitment, the research highlights how these dimensions influence individual and organizational-level OCB. Based on a review of over 80 publications (2018–2023) from databases such as Scopus, Google Scholar, and Web of Science, findings underscore the critical role of justice and commitment in enhancing organizational effectiveness. Focusing on private enterprises in Guangzhou, the study provides practical insights into fostering OCB through fair practices and committed leadership, contributing to sustainable development. Its originality lies in exploring the nuanced effects of justice and commitment dimensions on OCB, addressing gaps in current literature.

Keywords: organizational justice; organizational commitment; organizational citizenship behavior

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1. Introduction

In recent years, private enterprises have become key drivers of China's economic growth, particularly in Guangzhou. In 2022, they contributed 1,171.94 billion yuan to the city's GDP, accounting for 40.6%, and played a leading role in employment, innovation, exports, and tax revenue [1,2,3,4]. Amid rapid economic shifts, understanding organizational behavior, especially Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), has gained importance. OCB, defined as employees' voluntary efforts beyond formal duties, enhances operational efficiency and supports flat organizational structures. Pfeffer (1988) emphasized that people-oriented strategies like OCB are vital sources of competitive advantage [5,6].

Organizational justice (OJ) refers to employees' perceptions of fairness in decision-making, while organizational commitment (OC) reflects their loyalty and emotional investment [7,8]. Both are widely recognized as key factors influencing organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). When employees feel fairly treated and emotionally connected

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to the organization, they are more likely to engage in OCB, such as helping others, offering suggestions, and active involvement, which in turn enhances performance, satisfaction, and long-term success. Therefore, private enterprises should focus on strengthening OJ and OC to promote positive employee behaviors and drive organizational growth.

In summary, this study underscores the critical nexus between OC, OJ, and OCB within the realm of private enterprises, a connection that carries profound implications for employee performance and the enduring success of the enterprise. Through the cultivation of an equitable working milieu, the enhancement of employee commitment levels, and the encouragement of positive OCB, private enterprises can fortify their competitiveness and satisfaction, thus adapting to the increasingly fierce business environment.

2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework (**Figure 1**) outlines the hypothesized relationships among three dimensions of organizational justice (distributive, procedural, and interactional), three forms of organizational commitment (affective, continuance, and normative), and two types of organizational citizenship behavior: OCB-I and OCB-O. This model highlights how these constructs interact as key drivers of organizational performance. While it captures core relationships, it does not account for all possible variables, acknowledging the complexity of organizational dynamics.

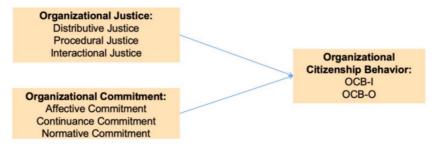


Figure 1. Research framework

3. Methodology

This study investigates the relationship between OC, OJ, and OCB within China's private enterprises, addressing a gap in OCB research in the Chinese context. As private enterprises play an increasingly vital role in China's economy, understanding these dynamics is essential for enhancing employee performance, satisfaction, and loyalty. Using a literature review matrix and keyword-based searches across databases such as Scopus, Google Scholar, and Web of Science, relevant studies from 2018 to 2023 were selected to ensure alignment with research objectives and currency within the academic field.

4. Results And Discussion

After reviewing all relevant references from literature comprehensively, the collected information was carefully examined: title, abstract, keywords, authors, year of publication, journal name, and full text, using a matrix of literature review. In other words, the authors had presented matrices of the constructs identified according to the collected information.

4.1. Organizational Justice

The theoretical underpinning of organizational justice finds its roots in equity theory, as originally postulated by Adams (1963) ^[9]. Equity theory posits that individuals' judgments of fairness and unfairness are inherently based on comparative assessments between themselves and others, taking into consideration the inputs and outcomes of these individuals. Moreover, Cropanzano et al. (2007) systematically categorized the three fundamental components of OJ, namely

distributive, procedural, and interactional justice, and provided detailed elucidations of their respective dimensions and characteristics [10].

4.1.1. Distributive Justice

Distributive justice is fundamentally concerned with the perceptual evaluation of fairness in the outcomes of decision-making processes and the allocation of resources [11]. These outcomes and resources may encompass tangible elements like monetary compensation or intangible aspects such as verbal commendation. The sense of distributive justice takes root when individuals perceive that these outcomes are dispensed equitably, thus fostering an atmosphere of distributive justice.

Distributive justice, concerned with the fair allocation of resources and opportunities, significantly influences employees' job satisfaction and performance ^[12]. In private enterprises, employees' perceptions of distributive fairness shape their willingness to engage in OCB ^[13]. Perceived inequity may lead to reduced OCB due to feelings of underappreciation. Conversely, fair treatment enhances organizational commitment, which positively correlates with OCB. Leadership also plays a mediating role, leaders who demonstrate fairness can strengthen employees' sense of justice and encourage greater OCB participation ^[14].

4.1.2. Procedural Justice

Procedural justice refers to employees' perceptions of fairness in organizational decision-making processes, characterized by consistency, impartiality, accuracy, ethical conduct, and opportunities for voice and correction. Even when outcomes are unfavorable, fair procedures can enhance employee satisfaction and support for organizational goals. Research confirms a positive relationship between procedural justice, organizational commitment, and OCB ^[15]. When employees perceive transparent and equitable processes, their trust and commitment increase, leading to greater engagement in OCB ^[16]. Leaders play a vital role in reinforcing procedural justice, as fair leadership fosters a sense of respect and inclusion, further encouraging discretionary behaviors that benefit the organization ^[17].

4.1.3. Interactional Justice

Interactional justice concerns the fairness and respect individuals experience in interpersonal interactions during decision-making processes. It involves being treated with dignity, receiving clear and respectful communication, and understanding the rationale behind decisions ^[18]. This form of justice strongly influences employee trust and organizational commitment ^[19]. When employees feel respected and fairly treated, their trust in the organization grows, enhancing their willingness to engage in OCB ^[20]. Fair interpersonal treatment fosters alignment with organizational goals and promotes positive discretionary behaviors that support overall performance ^[21].

4.2. Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment reflects an employee's psychological attachment and alignment with organizational values and goals, significantly influencing organizational effectiveness. Defined by Mowday et al. (1979) and Porter et al. (1974) as dedication and a sense of belonging, it remains a central concept in organizational behavior and HRM research [22,23]. Two influential multidimensional models emerged in the 1980s: O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) identified commitment through compliance, identification, and internalization, while Meyer and Allen (1984) proposed three types: affective, continuance, and normative commitment, capturing emotional attachment, perceived costs of leaving, and moral obligation [24,25].

4.2.1. Affective Commitment

Affective commitment refers to an employee's emotional attachment to and identification with the organization. Drawing on Mowday et al.'s and Kanter's earlier work, Meyer and Allen (1991) emphasized its role in linking tenure, perceived support, and organizational experience [26,27,28]. As a core dimension of organizational commitment, affective commitment is positively associated with OCB. Employees who feel emotionally connected and supported are more likely to demonstrate

loyalty and engage in extra-role behaviors ^[29]. In private enterprises, a culture that values emotional bonds and employee well-being can further strengthen affective commitment and enhance OCB ^[30].

4.2.2. Continuance Commitment

Continuance commitment, as defined by Allen and Meyer (1991), reflects employees' perceived costs of leaving the organization, often driven by economic or personal considerations [26]. While it may enhance job retention and satisfaction, its link to OCB is weaker compared to other commitment forms [31]. Research suggests continuance commitment does not mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and OCB^[32]. In private enterprises, a culture emphasizing long-term retention may strengthen continuance commitment but reduce discretionary behaviors like OCB. Leadership style also plays a role, supportive leaders can influence employees' sense of obligation to stay, indirectly shaping their engagement levels.

4.2.3. Normative Commitment

Normative commitment reflects an employee's sense of moral obligation to remain with the organization, often rooted in shared values and ethical alignment ^[25]. It involves an internalized duty to support organizational goals, making it positively associated with certain aspects of OCB, particularly civic virtue ^[33]. Ethical organizational culture and value-driven leadership can strengthen normative commitment by reinforcing employees' perception of moral congruence. However, research findings are mixed, some studies indicate a negative link between normative commitment and aspects of OCB such as ethics and sportsmanship, suggesting its influence on OCB may vary across behavioral dimensions ^{[34,35][36]}.

4.3. Organizational Citizenship Behavior

4.3.1. Definition of Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) refers to employees' voluntary actions that go beyond formal job requirements and are not directly rewarded, yet contribute to organizational effectiveness (Rubiyandono, 2019) [37]. Organ (1997) defines OCB as discretionary behavior that supports organizational functioning but lies outside the formal reward system [38], building on earlier work by Katz (1964) [39]. Despite its influence, Organ's definition has faced criticism for the ambiguity of "discretionary" behavior as job roles become less clearly defined (Organ, 1988) [40]. Das & Mohanty (2021) posit that Organ's conception of OCB applies to the entire organization, even though some aspects may be beneficial yet challenging to maintain [41]. Williams and Anderson (1991) proposed a two-dimensional model: OCB-Individual (OCB-I), targeting coworkers (e.g., altruism, courtesy), and OCB-Organization (OCB-O), benefiting the organization (e.g., conscientiousness, civic virtue, sportsmanship) [42]. This framework has become widely adopted in organizational behavior research.

4.3.2. Organizational Citizenship Behavior - Individual

OCB-I signifies the discretionary engagement of employees within an organization, exceeding their formally designated job responsibilities, and contributing to the organization's effective functioning and the enhancement of the work environment [43]. Private enterprises employ a range of incentive and reward mechanisms to stimulate employees' involvement in OCB-I, including bonuses, incentive schemes, promotion prospects, and more [43]. Furthermore, in the context of private enterprises, corporate culture and values wield a considerable influence on employees' engagement in OCB-I [44]. When companies value cooperation and voluntary behavior, employees are more motivated to engage in OCB-I. Supportive leadership in private enterprises plays a key role, leaders who encourage employee initiatives tend to promote greater OCB-I participation.

4.3.3. Organizational Citizenship Behavior - Organization

OCB-O signifies the voluntary engagement of employees in behaviors that contribute to the overall interests of the organization, extending beyond individual or team assistance [45]. It stands as a pivotal dimension of OCB, highlighting

employees' commitment and endorsement of the organization as a unified entity. Scholarly discourse underscores the pivotal role of OCB-O in enhancing organizational performance by bolstering the organization's reputation, social responsibility, and innovation [44]. Engaging in OCB-O often instills a sense of purpose and engagement among employees, fostering their belief in contributing to the organization's long-term success and societal welfare. OCB-O acts as a catalyst for organizations to attain social responsibility objectives, exerting significant societal impact on employees, thereby fostering a sense of participation in societal betterment initiatives. Within the context of private enterprises, corporate culture and values profoundly influence employee involvement in OCB-O. Companies that prioritize social responsibility, innovation, and societal advancement tend to inspire heightened motivation among employees to engage in OCB-O [45]. Leadership within private enterprises assumes a pivotal role in promoting employee participation in OCB-O. Leaders who actively endorse, and support employees tend to facilitate more robust engagement in OCB-O initiatives.

5. Conclusion

This study provides an extensive review of the existing literature concerning OJ, OC, and OCB. It underscores the significant influence of these variables on bolstering organizational performance, employee satisfaction, loyalty, and other pertinent aspects. OJ is posited as a driver of employee attitudes towards the organization, which, in turn, shapes their subsequent behaviors, including motivation, active engagement, commitment, and loyalty to the organization. Moreover, prior research has demonstrated that OC exerts a further impact on employee retention rates and OCB. Nevertheless, the varying outcomes of distinct studies indicate that different dimensions of OC may manifest divergent effects on OCB.

The present focus on OCB, encompassing both OCB-I and OCB-O, underscores the profound influence these behaviors have on organizational advancement. It seeks to delve into the nuanced impacts of different dimensions within these variables on OCB, thereby contributing to filling critical gaps in the existing body of research. Nonetheless, it is imperative to acknowledge that OCB is influenced by a multitude of factors. Future investigations may explore alternative perspectives such as organizational culture, employee participation, and leadership styles, to further enrich our understanding of these intricate dynamics. The research on OJ, OC, and OCB, as presented in this paper serves to elevate awareness within private enterprises regarding these essential factors. It also furnishes valuable recommendations to foster the constructive behavioral development of employees while guiding enterprises toward sustainable growth.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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