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# A Study on the Effect of Organizational Justice and Commitment on the Organizational Citizenship Behavior

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**Abstract.** In today's research it has been confirmed that organizational citizenship behavior has a significant effect on the performance of employees and organization. Therefore, this research investigating factors affecting organizational citizenship behavior including organizational justice and organizational commitment. The present study is an applied research in terms of purpose, a causal-effect in terms of research nature and approach, a descriptive survey in terms of data collection and a quantitative in terms of data type. The research population includes 124 employees and middle managers in Lorestan who were surveyed by census sampling method and; a questionnaire has also been used to collect data from them. The results of path analysis indicate that organizational justice directly and indirectly (through the mediator role of organizational commitment) has a positive and significant effect on organizational citizenship behavior.

**Keywords :** Organizational justice, Organizational commitment, Organizational citizenship behavior.

**Abstrak.** Hasil penelitian saat ini menunjukkan bahwa perilaku kewargaan organisasi memiliki pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap kinerja karyawan dan organisasi. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi perilaku kewargaan organisasi termasuk keadilan organisasi dan komitmen organisasi. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian terapan berdasarkan tujuan, penelitian sebab akibat dan menggunakan survei dalam hal pengumpulan data dengan data kuantitatif. Populasi penelitian meliputi 124 karyawan dan manajer menengah di Lorestan yang disurvei dengan menggunakan metode total sampling. Hasil path analisis menunjukkan bahwa keadilan organisasi secara langsung dan tidak langsung (melalui peran mediator dari komitmen organisasi) memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap perilaku kewargaan organisasi.

**Kata kunci :** Keadilan organisasional, komitmen organisasional, perilaku kewargaan organisasional.

## INTRODUCTION

Today, organizations are not capable of developing effectiveness without the willingness of employees to cooperate. The difference between spontaneous cooperation and compulsory cooperation is very important. In the mode of compulsory, individuals perform their duties in accordance with the rules and standards of an organization, but in the mode of spontaneous, individuals use their own insight and efforts to flourish of personal abilities and even for the benefit of the organization. Most managers also want employees who work more than their job descriptions. They are looking for employees that go beyond expectations and have a high Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) generally. Nowadays, exaggerated, voluntary and beneficial efforts are called as "extravagant behaviors" or "OCB". (Organ, 1988) considers OCB as spontaneous and conscious behavior that is not directly reinforced by the formal organizational reward system, but overall, it will enhance organizational effectiveness.

Various researchers believe that OCB behavior will have many positive consequences, such as increased productivity, more effectiveness, promotion of positive relationships among employees, effective use of scarce resources, and so on (Bergeron et al., 2011). Therefore, considering the

importance of OCB, research in this field and identifying the factors affecting it is very important. In this regard (Podsakoff et al, 2000) believed that investigating predictor factors for the occurrence of OCB is one of the important research areas in the field of organizational behavior. The experts in this field believe that a set of conditions should be provided in the organization and in the organization's employees to allow employees to make this type of behavior. Recognizing the underlying factors for OCB is important, because by identifying those factors the organization can take steps to strengthen them, thus allowing more and better exploitation of the consequences of OCB.

From the perspective of various researchers, organizational justice is one of the key factors in the organization which in addition to effect on OCB also effects on many other organizational variables (Niehoff and Moorman's, 1993) view, organizational justice refers to individual perceptions of fairness and it affects other job variables. Talk about the motivational basis for OCB (Organ, 1990) believes that the sense of justice plays an important role in promoting OCB, the existence of organizational justice at the workplace indicates the importance of the organization to the employees and in this situation, employees will be committed to the organization a double-covenant will be established between the employees and the organization

(Bergeron et al., 2011). In general, various researches show that when employees feel the sense of justice in the organization, are more likely to exhibit OCB (Nadiri and Tanova, 2010; Zeinabadi and Salehi, 2011; Guangling, 2011).

Also recently, organizational commitment is considered as another important factor in the development of OCB in management studies. Because the level of employee commitment can be effective in developing OCB, organizational commitment has been recognized as one of the important preconditions for OCB. In this regard, some studies report that OCB is considered as a reflection of employees' commitment to their organization and empirically, organizational commitment is related to OCB (Jahangir et al. 2004). In addition, different studies indicate that organizational justice, organizational commitment, citizenship behavior and their belongings can impact on employees' beliefs, feelings, attitudes and, finally behaviors (e.g. Chen et al., 2010; Zayas-Ortiz et al., 2015; Baranik and Eby, 2016).

Since OCB is one of the essential requirements of today's organizations, more attention from organizations to this field has become increasingly important that in the meantime, universities have double sensitivity. The university is bedrock of the change and development for every social system and powerful university human resources are necessary for every sustainable change and development. University authorities with the help of behavioral and human resources specialists should pay particular attention to the growth of employees, because having a capable and efficient manpower who has a tendency to selflessness and voluntary work, will have many benefits for universities. Lorestan universities are no exception to this. They will be able to adapt themselves to changes and create a potential capacity to exploit their human abilities by having friendly, committed, excited employees and implementing organizational justice. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between organizational justice, organizational commitment and OCB among employees and managers of Lorestan universities. Hence, addressing this issue will be the key to enriching the research literature on OCB and its related variables.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) includes employees' voluntarily behaviors which are not considered as their official tasks and are not directly considered by rewarding system albeit they improve organizational effectiveness (Huang et al., 2004; Organ, 1988). According to (Castro et al, 2004) the key elements of OCB include: 1) A group of behaviors which goes beyond from what is formally defined by the organization; 2) A group of unclear behaviors; 3) Behaviors which are not rewarded officially and are not recognized by formal structures; 4) The behaviors that important for performance, effectiveness and success of the organization.

Yet, there is no concurrence among authors on the OCB dimensions. Such dimension as supportive behaviors, sportsmanship, organizational loyalty, obeying the orders, personal innovation, consciousness, individual development, courtesy, civil behavior and altruism are considered as the aspects of OCB in various studies (Podsakoff et al., 2000). Perhaps, the most credible categorization on the aspects and components of organizational OCB is provided by Organ, (1988) referred in different studies. These

aspects include: Civic Virtue, Altruism, Conscientiousness, Sportsmanship and Courtesy. A parsimonious two-category classification was thus suggested by Williams and Anderson (1991) of classifying all OCB behaviors into OCB directed towards individuals (OCBI) and OCB directed towards the organization (OCBO). Altruism and courtesy would be examples of OCBI, and sportsmanship and civic virtue would be examples of OCBO. They stated OCBI refer to behaviors that immediately benefit specific individuals, for instance, helping others or taking a keen interest in other employees. OCBO also refers to behaviors that benefit the organization as a whole, for instance, an employee may give advance notice when unable to come to work, or adhere to informal rules devised to maintain order (Williams and Anderson, 1991). In present paper, these five dimensions are discussed.

Civic virtue has been derived from Graham's discussion of the responsibilities of employees as citizens of the company. This represents commitment towards the organization as a whole. Employees high on civic virtue may participate in management activities such as policy debates, attend meetings which discuss organizational strategy, or monitor the environment for threats to and opportunities for the organization (Graham, 1991). In addition, individual initiative has been considered another form of OCB. This includes acts that are far beyond the ordinarily expected roles of an employee. It may include creative and innovative acts, which improve the performance of one or many employees. In addition, individual initiative might have implications for the whole organization. This indicates going above and beyond the call of duty and is similar to Organ's conscientiousness construct (Organ, 1988).

Altruism indicates helping behavior towards co-workers or others that helps achieve organizational objectives without being asked to do so. Examples of this could be helping fellow workers become more productive, or volunteering to do tasks without being asked when at work (Castro et al., 2004). Moreover, Organ (1988) defined Sportsmanship as "a willingness to tolerate the inevitable inconveniences and impositions of work without complaining". This is related to the idea of playing the game in the spirit of the game, and not being inconvenienced by losing a game. Thus, those employees who maintain a cheerful outlook even when things do not go their way, or their suggestions are not listened to, exhibit sportsmanship. Courtesy refers to think about actions by someone on other people (Castro et al., 2004). Organ also believed that Courtesy is foresightful gestures that help someone else prevent a problem (like providing advance notice to those who need it).

Cognitive science theorists believe that behavior is a function of beliefs, expectations, values and other conceptions of human mind (Hakkak et al., 2015). Put it differently, behavior is a result of human rational and intentional selection. One of the cognitive theories of motivation is equality theory which is based on this assumption that employee cognitions are the key to understanding their motivation. Some researchers have called equality theory as justice expansion theory since it emphasizes on fairness distribution of revenues among people to achieve higher levels of motivation (Pojman, 1995). Studies indicate that justice processes and how to treat people in organizations may impact on employees' beliefs, feelings, motivations

and behaviors (Bos, 2001).

Employees at least are faced with two resources to execution or violation of justice in the organization. One of these sources is the direct supervisor or manager who has the full authority over the subordinate and can impact on such variables as increase in payments and/or promotion opportunities for subordinate. The second source is organization. Although this source is more intangible, but it's important to pay attention (Jafari and Bidarian, 2012). Studies show that justice process plays an important role in influencing employees' beliefs, feelings, attitudes and behaviors. The fair behavior with employees by organization leads to their higher commitment to the organization and OCB. On the other hand, it is more likely those people who feel injustice would leave the organization or show lower levels of organizational commitment and they may even start abnormal behaviors such as revenge (Iqbal et al., 2012). Another point that has been addressed in this research is the types of organizational justice, its preconditions and consequences. As Colak and Erdost (2004) stated in their research, the theme of justice has preoccupied writers and philosophers throughout the ages. However, the systematic study of the concept in social settings and organizations can be traced back to only 1960s. Research in this slightly over forty-year period has shown that justice in organizational settings can be depicted as a three dimensional phenomenon: Fairness of outcomes of resource allocations (distributive justice), fairness of the processes in the distribution of those outcomes (procedural justice), and fairness and quality of the treatment that employee receive from decision makers (interactional justice). They among others, provides clear definitions on the three aforementioned types of justice in organizational context. According to them:

Distributional justice is conceptualized as the fairness associated with decision outcomes and distribution of resources. The outcomes or resources distributed may be tangible (e.g., pay) or intangible (e.g., praise). Distributive justice can be fostered when outcomes are perceived to be equally applied. Meanwhile, Procedural justice is defined as the fairness of the processes that lead to outcomes. When individuals feel that they have a voice in the process or that the process involves characteristics such as consistency, accuracy, ethicality, and lack of bias then procedural justice is enhanced. And finally, Interactional justice includes the treatment that an individual receives as decisions are made and can be promoted by providing explanations for decisions and delivering the news with sensitivity and respect (Bies & Moag, 1986). It also refers to perceptions of respect and propriety in one's treatment while informational justice relates to the adequacy of the explanations given in terms of their timeliness, specificity, and truthfulness. Interpersonal justice reflects the degree to which people are treated with politeness, dignity, and respect by authorities and third parties involved in executing procedures or determining outcomes (Colak and Erdost, 2004).

Organizational commitment influences individuals' behavior. Commitment shows the feeling of identity and individual dependence to organization. No organization can be successful without its employees' commitment and efforts. Managers should keep and groom the commitment and sustainability of them and their employees to

organization (Wolowska, 2014). There are different definitions on organizational commitment; however, the most usual way to treat organizational commitment is expressed as an emotional dependency or loyalty to organization (Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002; Meyer and Allen, 1997). Organizational commitment is an important occupational and organizational attitude respected by many authors in organizational and psychological fields especially social psychology in recent years. The positive impact of organizational commitment on performance is supported in many researches (such as, Hafiz, 2017; Nazir and Islam, 2017; Roca-Puig et al., 2007; etc.). Moreover, People with lower commitment would experience higher work, leaving (Allen and Meyer, 1997) and absenteeism Angle and Perry (1981).

The model proposed by Meyer and Allen is the most frequently analyzed model and its authors are said to have had the greatest contribution to the development to multi-dimensional approach to organizational commitment (Wolowska, 2014). The initial theoretical proposition of Meyer and Allen (1984) consisted in distinguishing two commitment components: affective and continuance. Further, the model was extended by a third component - normative commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1990).

The affective component means emotional commitment of an employee to the organization and identification with it. The persons with strong affective commitment continue their employment in the organization because they want to do so. The choice of the notion -affective commitment- was conditioned by a belief that all factors involved in the development of this component are accompanied by strong positive feeling, and this is probably the most essential aspect of this form of commitment. Moreover, Continuance component is the awareness of costs connected with abandoning the organization. Employees whose basic attachment with the organization is based on the continuance component remain within it as they need to do so. And finally, normative commitment component is the sense of moral duty to stay in the organization. Persons with high level of normative commitment feel that they ought to do so.

In recent years, several studies are conducted on the constructions in present paper and we mention some of these studies. Ghafuri and Golparvar (2009) concluded that organizational justice and its three components have a significant correlation with each aspect of organizational commitment, that is, emotional normative and continuous commitment. By their correlation results, Porsultni and Naghandar (2013) found that there is a positive and significant association between organizational commitment and OCB. Likewise, regressive analysis results indicate that of organizational commitment components, emotional commitment has more power to predict teachers' OCB. In a research by Ansary et al. (2010) it was determined that organizational commitment and job satisfaction impacts on OCB directly. Azizi et al. (2009) found a positive association between commitment and OCB in athletic organizations. In their study on 166 employees in an organization in north China, Liu and Cohen (2010) found that organizational commitment impacts on OCB extremely. Mogotsi et al. (2011) assert that organizational commitment predicts OCB remarkably.



In their study on teachers, Cohen and Liu (2011) proved that commitment significantly impacts on teachers' OCB and performance. In their article, Bohluli et al. (2010) concluded that organizational justice significantly associates with different aspects of OCB. Ascigil et al. (2005)

show that employees' OCB would be increased if they are treated fairly in the organizations and supervisors have good relations to them. According to the discussed issues, the hypothesized model of the research is presented as shown in Figure 1.

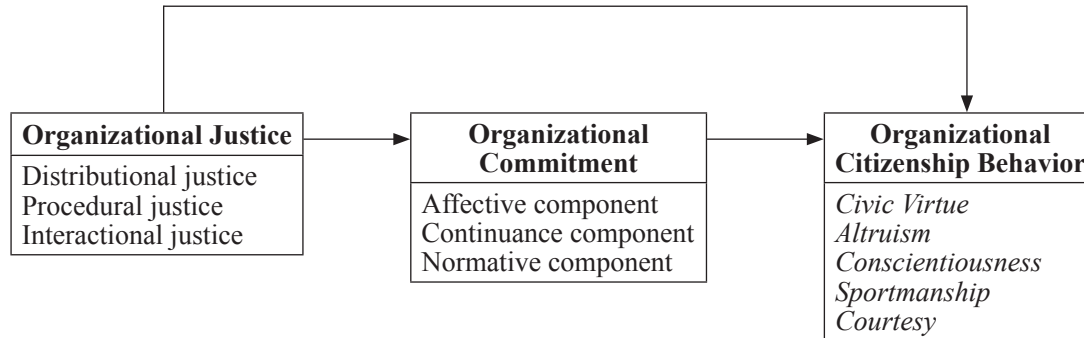


Figure 1. Hypothesized model of Research

## RESEARCH METHOD

In terms of purpose, present paper is an applied one while it is a descriptive survey – type in terms of data collection method. Its population consists of official employees and middle managers in Khoramabad national universities (Lorestan and Medical Sciences Universities). Due to the availability of all people in the population (include 124 employees and middle managers), a census sampling method was used. According to this method, the researcher conducted this research on all people in the population and all them surveyed individually. In addition, data were collected through a questionnaire with 54-item. After distributing questionnaires among the population, 113 questionnaires were returned correctly (return rate 91 percent). Three questionnaires are used in present study: organizational justice (Niehoff and Moorman, 1993), organizational commitment (Meyer et al., 1993) and organizational citizenship behavior (Netemeyer et al., 1997). These questionnaires are based on the Likert scale of 5 degrees. Their reliability was computed by Chronbach's  $\alpha$  value (0.78, 0.84 and 0.81 respectively) which indicates their high reliability. To measure validity, needed modifications were made by opinions of experts and professors. After collecting data, they analyzed using statistical techniques such as multivariate regression analysis and path analysis and the

hypotheses were tested.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Present study examines important constructs as organizational justice and organizational commitment and their effect on OCB. Therefore, this study defined OCB as a dependent variable, organizational commitment as a mediating variable and organizational justice as an independent variable. It is worth stating that the main hypothesis of this research is investigating the indirect effect of organizational justice on OCB through the mediation of organizational commitment. In this line, three sub-hypothesis are presented as follow: 1) H1: Organizational commitment has a positive and significant effect on OCB; 2) H2: Organizational justice has a positive and significant effect on OCB; 3) H3: Organizational justice has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment.

Research hypotheses were tested using multivariate regression analysis and path analysis as below :

OCB as dependent variable and organizational justice and organizational commitment as independent variables are counted as independent variables in the regression model. Initially, the results of variance analysis and regression ration of the first step are analyzed. The results of variance analysis of variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The Test of Analysis of Variance

Model	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	40.17	2	20.08	179.19	0.000
Residual	31.05	277	0.112		
Total	71.23	279			

Source: Research Findings

As seen at table 1, the p-value is less than 5% at confidence level 95 percent, so there is a significant relationship between independent and dependent variables that this relation is not based on random and luck. It can claim that organizational justice and organizational commitment

explaining OCB changes significantly. Now, since there is a significant relationship between research variables (dependent and independent variables), regression coefficients of each independent variable investigated separately as show in Table 2.

**Table 2. Regression Coefficients of Variables**

Model	Non-Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	SE	Beta		
Fixed	0.277	0.198	-----	1.394	0.164
Justice	0.229	0.52	0.220	4.41	0.000
Commitment	0.692	0.58	0.597	11.97	0.000

Source: Research Findings

Concerning significance level of each variable, one can analyze significant relations of independent variables with OCB. As table 2 showed, it can say that organizational justice and organizational commitment has a direct effect on OCB is supported. In fact, OCB is influenced by organizational commitment and organizational justice. Organizational justice and organizational commitment has positive and significant effects on OCB equal to 0.22 and 0.60 respectively. The results of t-value and significance level for each path (t-value=4.41, sig<0.05 to justice-OCB

and t-value=11.97, sig<0.05 to commitment-OCB), show that two sub-hypotheses (H1 and H2) are supported and it is determined that OCB originates from both organizational commitment and organizational justice.

Dependent variable in past step (OCB) is analyzed from outside and instead of OCB, organizational commitment as dependent and organizational justice as independent variables are inserted in the regression model. The results of variance analysis of variables are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. The Test of Analysis of Variance**

Model	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	19.45	1	19.45	161.2	0.000
Residual	33.53	278	0.121		
Total	52.98	279			

Source: Research Findings

According to table 3, the p-value is less than 5% at confidence level 95 percent; one can say that there is a significant relationship between independent and dependent variables. Hence, it can be interpretation that organizational justice explaining

organizational commitment changes significantly. Concerning the significant relationship between independent variables and regression coefficients of independent variable, the model is examined as seen in Table 4.

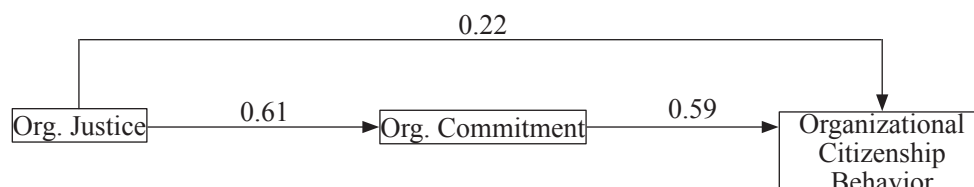
**Table 4. Regression Coefficients of Variables**

Model	Non-Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	SE	Beta		
Fixed	2.217	0.157	-	14.13	0.000
Justice	0.543	0.043	0.61	12.70	0.000

Source: Research Findings

According to the results of significance level and regression coefficient in confidence level 95 percent, it is to interpret that organizational justice effect on organizational commitment directly. In fact, organizational justice has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment equal to 0.61. The results of t-value

and significance level for relevant path (t-value=12.70, sig<0.05), show that third sub-hypotheses (H3) are supported and it is determined that organizational commitment originates from organizational justice. The results of three sub-hypotheses tests graphically are presented in Figure 2.

**Figure 2. Operational model of Research**

Source: Research Findings

Considering the impacts of sub-hypotheses, it can conclude that research main hypothesis is supported. Therefore, direct and indirect coefficients of independent

variables (organizational commitment and organizational commitment) on dependent variable (OCB) are computed in Table 5.

**Table 5. The Test of Analysis of Variance**

Hypothesis	Direct Coefficients	Indirect Coefficients	Total
Org. Justice → OCB	0.22	0.36 (by Commitment)	0.58
Org. Justice → Org. Commitment	0.61	----	0.61
Org. Commitment → OCB	0.597	-----	0.597

Source: Research Findings

As the results show, Organizational commitment variable plays a positive mediator role in promoting OCB; Previously stated, organizational justice has a positive effect on OCB (0.22 percent), so the effect will be 36 (0.59\*0.61) by mediating an organizational commitment in this path. Consequently, the total effect of justice on OCB directly and indirectly (by organizational commitment) increases to 0.58.

## CONCLUSION

The importance of organizational justice, employees' organizational commitment and OCB in academic environments demands a special attention. In universities, OCB by managers and employees is too important. Due to importance of this issue, several researches are conducted in different fields both inside and outside the country. The finding motivated authors to study the links and causes and effects of organizational justice, organizational commitment and OCB. The final model clarified that organizational justice impacts on OCB both directly and indirectly (through organizational commitment) while organizational commitment impacts on organizational behavior directly.

Concerning the support of organizational justice direct and indirect impact on OCB as well as direct impact of organizational commitment on OCB, one should consider special importance for organizational justice and its components alongside employees' organizational commitment and its components. It is highly important compared to the results of other researches. Undoubtedly, values and attitudes play a vital role in behavioral orientations and university is one of the entities which address training and shifts in this field. Therefore, no desired performance is achieved without availability of committed workforce whose superiors consider necessary organizational justice on them. One should internalize planning organizational ethical and mental issues such as organizational justice, commitment and OCB.

Hence, it is suggested to organizations and especially universities of the country to improve their OCB by identifying the factors that affect it; and thereby create a suitable environment for the development of OCB. In general, it is suggested to universities with a practical approach that provide favorable conditions for OCB to take advantage of its benefits. According to the results, among the factors that have effect on OCB, organizational justice and commitment Identified as factors that are useful in improving OCB.

Moreover, this research like many researches in the field of humanities has some limitations, for example, one can refer to doing it at national universities in a province (Lorestan). If there was a possibility of research in several provinces, the ability to generalize of research has increased certainly. Other limitations of this research can be no considering factors such as organizational culture and individual characteristics in organization- and individual-level. So it is suggested to researchers to re-create this research by considering different factors and doing it in other organizations or provinces in their future research.

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