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Exploring the Path from Organizational Justice to Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Job Commitment as a Mediator

Jamnean Joungrakul¹, Ian David Smith^{2*}

1. College of Social Sciences, Far East University, Eumseong-gun, Chungcheongbuk-do 27601, Korea.
2. School of Education & Social Work, The University of Sydney, Sydney 2006, Australia.

Abstract

In the context of information technology (IT) development projects, having skilled employees is essential for success. However, it is not enough to just recruit and retain talent; employees must also contribute meaningfully by engaging in behaviors such as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). IT employees have distinct motivational factors and exhibit different patterns of OCB compared to those in other fields. Furthermore, the dynamic environment of project work influences organizational citizenship behavior, creating a context that may not align with traditional perceptions of justice seen in other operational roles. To examine whether perceptions of justice can influence positive behaviors in this context, a survey was conducted among members of IT development teams. The data collected from 141 respondents indicated that perceptions of justice led to higher job commitment, which in turn mediates the relationship between organizational citizenship and justice behavior. Therefore, project leaders should focus on enhancing employees' perceptions of fairness, especially regarding the distribution of rewards and behaviors, to foster greater organizational citizenship.

Keywords: Organizational justice, Organizational citizenship behavior, Information technology, Job commitment

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Corresponding author: Ian David Smith

E-mail ✉ ismih12@bigpond.com

Introduction

Boundary-spanning information technology (IT) projects require the presence of both clearly defined in-role behaviors and extra-role behaviors to ensure project success. Organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs), which are vital for organizational effectiveness, are especially critical when there is interdependence among employees, as seen in information system development projects. OCBs encompass actions such as preventing issues, completing unfinished tasks, assisting colleagues, identifying gaps in functions, and engaging in organizational processes. These behaviors, although not explicitly defined, required, or rewarded, are crucial for the functioning of the organization. Jobs that involve organizational boundaries often demand initiative and resourcefulness, with much ambiguity surrounding the tasks.

Given the unique nature of IT work, which often involves complex problem-solving and technological innovation, there is a need to better understand how IT employees exhibit organizational citizenship behavior, as they are often motivated differently and have distinct expectations compared to other employees in an organization [1-6]. While in-role behaviors, like job retention and task execution, have been widely studied, there is limited research on the practices and policies that promote organizational citizenship behavior in IT employees [7-9].

Given the importance of OCBs in IT project success, it is crucial to explore how these behaviors can be fostered in IT department employees working on projects. Previous research in other fields has provided insights into how organizational



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justice perception (i.e., employees' perceptions of fairness in how the managers behave) influences work behaviors. These studies, while not focused on projects, suggest that different forms of organizational justice—such as distributive, procedural, and interactional justice—can have a significant impact on work commitment and organizational citizenship behavior [10-13]. Additionally, job commitment (the perception that one's job is important in their life) has been shown to play a key role in motivating IT employees [14-17].

Thus, organizational justice and job commitment can serve as motivational factors in fostering organizational citizenship behavior in IT employees. This study aims to explore the following questions:

Does job commitment motivate IT employees to exhibit effective citizenship behavior?

Which type of organizational justice promotes organizational citizenship behavior, and does job commitment mediate this relationship?

Does organizational justice in the organization enhance job commitment and improve organizational citizenship behavior?

Materials and Methods

This research is cross-sectional and serves a practical purpose. Secondary data were collected through library methods, while primary data were gathered using questionnaires. A random sampling method was employed for this study, with the sample size determined based on the Cochran formula. The required sample size was 157 participants; however, to enhance the quality of the data, 200 questionnaires were distributed, and 141 valid responses were analyzed.

The research process is divided into two stages. In the first stage, divergent validity and the convergent, as well as the reliability of the model and questionnaire, are analyzed. The second stage involves testing the study's hypotheses using statistical software. For data analysis, SPSS version 23 and Smart PLS software were utilized.

Results and Discussion

The demographic specifications of the respondents in this research are provided in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Demographic specifications of the respondents.

	Variable	N	%
Gender	Female	35	24.8
	Male	106	75.2
Education	Diploma	15	10.6
	Associate degree	7	5
	Bachelor	53	37.6
	Masters and above	66	46.8
History of work	< 10 years	11	7.8
	10-20 years	49	34.8
	> 20 years	81	57.4
Category of Job	Managerial	69	48.9
	Specialized	64	45.4
	Executive	8	5.7
Total		141	100

Table 2 presents the variables and constructs analyzed in the questionnaire. Given that the recommended value for Cronbach's alpha is 0.7, for the composite reliability, it is 0.7, and for the average variance extracted (AVE) it is 0.5, the findings shown in **Table 2** indicate that all these criteria meet the appropriate values. Therefore, it can be confirmed that the final proportion and convergent validity of our study are satisfactory.

Table 2. Variables and constructs were examined in the questionnaire.

Structure	Numbers	Cronbach's alpha	Compound reliability	Average variance extracted	Reference
Justice distributive	5	0.77	0.843	0.520	Niehoff and Moorman [18]
Justice procedural	3	0.899	0.936	0.831	Tekleab <i>et al.</i> [19]
Justice interactive	6	0.896	0.921	0.661	Aryee <i>et al.</i> [20]
Job commitment	10	0.91	0.931	0.57	Kanungo [21]
Organizational citizenship behavior	10	0.90	0.922	0.54	Randall <i>et al.</i> [22]

To assess the construct's discriminant validity with reflective indicators, AVE must exceed the square of the correlations between the construct and the other constructs in the model. Since the constructs meet this condition, it indicates that the discriminant validity of the model is acceptable, as shown in **Table 3**.

Table 3. Divergent validity for the measurement model.

Structure	Distributive	Procedural	Interactive	Job commitment	Organizational citizenship behavior
Justice distributive	0.721	-	-	-	-
Justice procedural	0.47	0.911	-	-	-
Justice interactive	0.624	0.56	0.813	-	-
Job commitment	0.65	0.482	0.730	0.754	-
Organizational citizenship behavior	0.674	0.56	0.683	0.71	0.734

After assessing the psychological and final aspects of the measurement model, the conceptual model of the study was tested using standard regression weights (path coefficients) and the explained variance (R^2) associated with the endogenous (dependent) variables. According to Falk and Miller (1992), if a variable fails to reach the minimum threshold of 0.1 for explained variance, it suggests that other unexamined factors influence that variable. **Table 4** indicates that both of the endogenous (dependent) variables meet the minimum required value.

Table 4. Explained variance related to dependent variables.

Endogenous structures	R^2
Job commitment	0.596
Organizational citizenship behavior	0.651

The most crucial criterion for determining the relationship between the structural components (constructs) in the model is the significance values. If these values exceed 1.96, 2.57, and 3.27, it indicates the validity of the relationship between the constructs, confirming the study hypotheses at confidence levels of 95%, 99%, and 99.9%, respectively. To examine whether justice influences organizational citizenship behavior and job commitment the hypotheses were tested through the significance coefficients. The results of these tests are provided in **Table 5**.

Table 5. Test results summary.

Assumptions	Relationships	Path coefficient (β)	T-value	Results
1	Distributive $\rightarrow$ Job commitment	0.309	3.987	Approved
2	Procedural $\rightarrow$ Job commitment	0.053	0.951	Not approved
3	Interactional $\rightarrow$ Job commitment	0.507	6.085	Approved
4	Job commitment $\rightarrow$ Organizational citizenship behavior	0.807	25.097	Approved

To assess the overall fit of the model, the goodness of fit (GOF) index was used. Volterra *et al.* proposed three thresholds for GOF values: 0.36, 0.25, and 0.01, which represent strong, medium, and weak fit, respectively. The formula for calculating the GOF is as follows:

$$GoF = \sqrt{Communitality \times R^2} \quad (1)$$

The study's findings confirm the GoF value of 0.6256, indicating that the model demonstrates a very good fit. The research showed that job commitment positively correlates with organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) among IT employees. In addition, there is a positive relationship between job commitment and perceived organizational justice, with interactional and distributive justice emerging as significant factors.

Interestingly, IT employees perceive organizational policies as less influential on their job motivation, making procedural justice less impactful in comparison to interactional and distributive justice. This aligns with Field Theory, which suggests that an individual's behavior is significantly influenced by nearby, prominent environmental factors [23, 24]. Therefore, fairness and justice take precedence over procedural elements in affecting behavior.

The study provides novel insights by exploring how each type of organizational justice influences job commitment in IT employees. It was found that job commitment is impacted by employees' perceptions of fairness in how they are treated within the organization. IT managers should prioritize not only employees' technical abilities but also ensure that the work environment supports a fair and just perception, as this will likely contribute to IT project success.

The research emphasizes that distributive justice should include careful attention to the assignment of duties and tasks. Interactional justice plays a role when decisions about task assignments are made. Project managers need to ensure that all decisions, especially those related to task distribution and project roles, are made transparently and fairly, which ultimately leads to a more committed workforce.

The study also concluded that organizational justice, particularly interactional and distributive justice, has a direct impact on job commitment, which, in turn, drives organizational citizenship behavior. This insight implies that project managers should rethink their leadership approaches, as an unfair environment can decrease job commitment and lower performance levels.

When delegating tasks, managers must consider the internal and growth needs of employees, aligning tasks with employees' intrinsic motivations to foster a higher level of commitment. Lack of fairness in how employees perceive their treatment can lead to disengagement, decreased motivation, and reluctance to share critical knowledge. The research suggests that managers should engage in regular, transparent communication with team members to ensure fairness, particularly when making decisions about promotions or rewards.

To establish and maintain organizational justice, organizations should prioritize fair distribution of rewards and promote equitable access to management and peers. By enhancing interactional and distributive justice, they can increase job commitment, which will consequently strengthen OCBs. This approach will not only boost individual job satisfaction but also contribute to the overall success of the organization's projects.

Conclusion

This research aimed to assess the impact of perceived organizational justice on the behavior and attitudes of IT project team members. The results from 141 respondents indicate that employees' perceptions of fairness significantly contribute to increased job commitment. Additionally, job commitment was identified as a key mediator linking perceptions of justice to OCBs. Consequently, project leaders must focus on fostering a sense of fairness in how behaviors and rewards are distributed, as this can lead to enhanced job commitment and promote positive OCBs.

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