

## Career Stage and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour among Indian Managers

**Akhilendra K. Singh and A. P. Singh**  
Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi

Organizational citizenship behavior is now considered as fifth bottom line variable in organization behavior research and practice. Several studies have been conducted to identify antecedents and consequences of this bottom line variable. By using the career stage model proposed by Super, we have endeavored to identify the levels of organizational citizenship behavior in different career stages. The research was conducted on 210 front level Indian managers. The results reveal that the executives exhibited significantly high level of OCB in establishment and maintenance stage than trial stage of the career. Although, differences of means score of OCB, in establishment and maintenance stage was trivial.

**Keywords:** Organizational citizenship behavior, Career stage, Organization tenure

Organizational effectiveness has always been a major concern for organizational behavior researchers and human resource practitioners. Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) has received the preponderance of research attention (Organ & Ryan, 1995; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996; Podsakoff, et al., 2000) amongst the multiple conceptualizations of discretionary work behavior (e.g., contextual performance, prosocial organizational behaviour, extra-role behavior, organization spontaneity). Organ (1988), defines OCB as "individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes effective functioning of the organization...the behaviour is not enforceable requirement of the role or the job description ... the behaviour is a matter of personal choice".

Organ (1988) proposed an expanded taxonomy of OCB that included: Conscientiousness (e.g. following rules, attendance, etc.), Courtesy (e. g. respecting

others, for example consulting with others before taking action), Altruism (e.g. helping others), Sportsmanship (e.g. avoiding pettiness such as gossip, not complaining about trivial matters etc.), and Civic virtue (e.g. keeping up with matters that affect the organization). Several other taxonomies of OCB have been proposed and operationalized (e.g., Borman & Motowidlo, 1993; Morrison, 1994; Van Dyne et al., 1994) but more or less they overlap with Organ's taxonomy.

### **Career Stage Model**

There is growing evidence that the relationship between work attitude and work behavior is moderated by career stage (Isabella, 1988; Jans, 1989; Ornstein, Cron, & Slocum, 1989). To explain the career dynamics of the employees several models have been developed by the researchers (for a review, see Greenhaus, 1987). The pioneer models in career related research in organization are the models of life development (age) proposed by Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, and McKee (1978; Levinson, 1986) and the career stage

development model (stage) proposed by Super (1957, 1980).

The central idea of Levinson's model is that people (men, at least), no matter of what occupation or background, will grow through specific life stages during which there are different crucial activities and psychological adjustments that must be completed. According to Levinson et al. (1978) these periods are closely associated with one's biological age. They have identified four 'life eras' childhood (0-20) (as this period of time is of little organizational interest), early adulthood (20-40), middle adulthood (40-60), and late adulthood (over 60).

Super's career development stages look like Levinson's schemes when it is put in comparable graphic form. Although conceptual scheme of Super's model differs radically from Levinson et al. (1978) formulation. It views the stages as rather firmly determined and as progressing in well-ordered sequence whereas Super's formulation has sought to make it clear that not only are the ages of transition very flexible, but each transition involves a recycling through the stages, a "minicycle" also (Super, 1984). Super clearly points out the key difference between his formulation of career stages and that of Levinson and others. According to Super, his model is determined by an individual's current circumstances and perceptions, whereas Levinson is determined strictly by age. But the fact remains that Super's model is similar to Levinson in identifying 'mini-cycles' or subsystems of each major career stage.

Super and the other researchers employing his model have focused primarily on four major career stages. These four stages are known as trial, establishment, maintenance, and decline. Trial stage is characterized by identifying interests, capabilities, fit between self and work, and professional self-image. Establishment stage is associated with increasing commitments to

career, career advancement, and growth to develop a stable work and personal life. To hold onto accomplishments earlier achieved to maintain self-concept is dominated in Maintenance stage whereas, to develop a new self-image that is independent of career success is core characteristics of Decline stage of Super's career development model.

Individuals in the trial stage of their career generally are less committed to their organization, less involved with their jobs, and less satisfied with their work than individuals in the establishment, maintenance, and decline stages (e.g. Cron & Slocum, 1986). Based on the process of exploration and lack of experience of people in the trial stage, it is also assumed that these individuals performance will be poor whereas, intention to leave the job will be high.

As the maintenance stage is in essence an adaptation to the achievements of the establishment stage, it is expected that job attitudes and performance will remain at essentially the same levels they reached during the establishment stage.

#### ***Measurement and Operationalization of Career Stage***

Most of the studies on Super's career stages development model have operationalized these stages by age. For example, Gould (1979) and Slocum and Cron (1985) both identified people as being in the trial stage if they are less than 30 years old, in the establishment stage if they are between 31 and 44, and in the maintenance stage if they are over 45. In essence, this definition holds that age or more generally work life experiences, shape occupational aspirations and concerns, and thus is a factor pinpointing career stages.

Other researchers have operationalized Super's stages by the job tenure - amount of time an individual has been in a job (Gould & Hawkins, 1978; Mount, 1984; Stumpf & Rabinowitz, 1981). Specifically, these

researchers operationalized the trial stage as less than 2 years on the job, the establishment stage as between 2 and 10 years on the job, and the maintenance stage as over 10 years on the job. In these studies it was found that satisfaction and performance varied across the stages, but not in any consistent order. In one study that directly tested the model of Super (1957), and Super, Zerkowitz, and Thompson (1981), Cron and Slocum (1986) found that people in the trial stage were significantly less satisfied, involved, and challenged in their job, and were poorer performers than individuals in any of the other stages. In consistence with previous studies (e.g., Morrow & McElroy, 1987; Bedeian, Pizzolatto, Long, & Griffeth, 1991) the present research used multiple operationalizations of career stage: age, and organization tenure.

#### **Hypotheses:**

On the basis of Super's conceptual suggestion and available research following hypotheses were proposed.

H1: The older executives would score significantly higher in terms of their levels of OCB than younger executives.

H2: The long termed tenured executives will score significantly higher in terms of their levels of OCB than short term tenured executives.

#### **Method**

##### **Sample:**

Participants in the study were 210 front level executives of public (N=102, 48.6%) and private (N=108, 51.4%) sector organizations. They were composed of 188 (89.5%) male and 22 (10.5%) female. Their job tenures with their organizations ranged from one (1) to thirty six (36) years with a mean tenure of 13.46 years (S.D = 10.30); while their age ranged from 21-60 years with a mean age of 31.07 years (SD = 10.75). Out of 210 participants 130 (61.9 %) rated themselves on OCB scale and 80 (38.1 %) were rated by their superior.

#### **Measures:**

##### **Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB):**

It was adopted from Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Moorman, and Fetter (1990). This five dimension scale focuses on performance in areas that are not a part of the requirements specified in the job description as follows: (a) altruism (b) conscientiousness (c) civic virtue (d) courtesy and (e) sportsmanship. A five point response format was used for this scale (1=strongly disagree, 3=neutral, 5=strongly agree). In Item analysis, items total correlation for all 24 items was found satisfactory on our sample. Internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) for the whole scale was found to be 0.85. Alpha was found to be 0.67 for conscientiousness, 0.71 for sportsmanship, 0.67, for civic virtue, 0.76 for courtesy and 0.71 for altruism dimension respectively.

In the present study, following Williams and Anderson (1991) suggestion organizational citizenship behaviour was categorized into two distinct forms: organizational citizenship behaviour directed toward individuals (OCBI) and organizational citizenship behaviour directed toward organization (OCBO). Altruism and courtesy were placed in the former category, whereas sportsmanship, civic virtue, and conscientiousness included in latter category.

#### **Results**

In order to determine whether older executives differ from younger executives in terms of their level of organizational citizenship behaviour, one way MANCOVA was performed. We have used the MANCOVA because in prior analysis (one-way ANOVA) it has been found that rating sources (self/superior) significantly influence the performance on OCB scale. In one way MANCOVA age categories were used as independent variable and entered in fixed factor column and organizational citizenship behaviour (OCBI, OCBO, & OCB total) has

been used as dependent variable. Rating sources are used as a control variable and entered in covariate column. The results of one way MANCOVA with Age categories as independent variable and OCB (OCBI, OCBO, & OCB total) as dependent variable were found to be significant for OCBI  $F(2, 207)=5.110$ ;  $p<.007$ , OCBO  $F(2, 207)=6.814$ ;  $p<.001$  and OCB total  $F(2, 207)=7.720$ ;  $p<.001$ ).

It is obvious from the results that executives over the age of 45 years show significantly high level of Organizational Citizenship behaviour than the executives who were under 30 years. Although, difference of mean scores of OCB between age categories of 31-44 and 45-60 was trivial.

Our Second hypothesis stated that the long termed tenured executives will score significantly higher in terms of their levels of OCB than short term tenured executives. To test this hypothesis one way MANCOVA was performed. In this analysis tenure categories were used as independent variable and entered in fixed factor column and organizational citizenship behaviour (OCBI, OCBO, & OCB total) has been used as dependent variable. Rating sources were used as a control variable and entered in covariate column. The results of MANCOVA with Tenure categories as independent variable and OCB (OCBI, OCBO, & OCB total) as dependent variable were found to be significant for OCBI  $F(2, 207)=3.101$ ;  $p<.047$ , OCBO  $F(2, 207)=5.440$ ;  $p<.005$  and OCB total  $F(2, 207)=5.494$ ;  $p<.005$ .

A keen observation of the results recorded in table 2 reveal that executives over the tenure of 10 years show significantly high level of Organizational citizenship behaviour than the executives having tenure of less than 3 years. Similarly, difference of mean scores of OCB of second (3-10) and third (11 and above years) categories were also momentous.

## Discussion

In present research we have tried to answer two specific questions. The first one is whether the older executives score significantly higher in terms of their levels of OCB than their younger counterparts. Obtained results indicate that executives over the age of 45 years show significantly high level of OCB than the executives of age under 30 years. Although, difference of mean scores of OCB between age categories of 31-44 and 45-60 was trivial. The finding of the present research is similar to the finding of Kuehn and Al-Busaidi (2002). Their study also shows that in Oman, respondents less than 30 years of age reported significantly lower OCB scores than those over 40 years of age. There might be several possible explanations why more aged executives exhibited high level of OCB than younger executives.

Ornstein, Cron, and Slocum Jr. (1989) reported that individuals in the trial stages of their careers were less committed, less satisfied, less involved, and challenged by their jobs than people in other career stages. It is evident from the Griffin's (2003) research that younger generation workers poses more negative perceptions of psychological sense of community than older generation workers, and that younger generation workers reported lower levels of effective organizational commitment than older generation workers. Therefore it is expected that low level of commitment, satisfaction and involvement in young age and trial stage of career will reduce the likelihood to engage in OCB.

Kegan's (1982) work with different stages of adult development suggested different interpersonal orientations for younger and older adults: Older adults tend to operate in terms of internal standards of meeting mutual and moral obligations; by contrast, younger adults tend to coordinate their needs with those of other individuals in a more transactional manner (Kanungo & Conger, 1993). Empirical evidence also suggest that older workers tend to have lower needs for achievement and

higher needs for affiliation than do younger workers (Doering, Rhodes, & Schuster, 1983). A person with high affiliative motive will socialize more and enjoy meeting and being with people. In contrast a person with high achievement motive will engage in competitive activities and is likely to spend more time in work (in role behaviour) so they are less likely to engage in extra role behaviour (OCB).

The second specific question which we have tried to answer in present study was whether long termed tenured executives score significantly higher in terms of their levels of OCB than short term tenured executives?

Obtained results reveal that executives over the tenure of 10 years show significantly high level of Organizational citizenship behaviour than the executives of tenure less than 3 years. Although, difference of mean scores of OCB of second (3-10) and third (11 and above years) categories was momentous. Our result is similar to the results of O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) and Morrison (1993); they have also reported that longer tenured employees performed more extra-role activities.

Previous studies reported that organizational tenure favorably affects the executive's job attitudes (job satisfaction and organizational commitment/ job involvement). Meyer and Allen (1991) found positive correlation between organizational tenure and organizational commitments. Committed employees value their membership in the organization and often develop expectations of continuity. It is argued that committed employees are more likely to engage in behaviors that enhance their value and support the organization. Several empirical studies have tested the link between organizational commitment and OCB. Researchers found that affective commitment correlated positively with self-report measures of OCB (Allen & Smith, 1987; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Chen et al., 1998; Morrison, 1994). Two

meta-analytic studies conducted by Organ and Ryan (1995), and Podsakoff et al. (2000) also reported the positive relationship of affective commitment and OCB. It is expected that organizational tenure positively influence the organizational citizenship behaviour through increasing the organizational commitment of executives.

In exploration stage it is required to learn the skills to do the job well. Becoming a contributing member of an organization is main developmental task whereas support, peer acceptance, and challenging position are the psychological needs of this stage. Consequently in maintenance stage developing broader view of work and organization and maintaining a high performance level is main developmental task and reduced competitiveness, securities, helping younger colleagues are the main psychological needs of this stage (Cron, 1984). People in the late stage of their career are in a stage of relative tranquility. They are more oriented to "settling down" and are less willing to relocate or leave the organization for purposes of promotion. Mowday, Porter, & Steer (1982) argued that levels of commitment developed during the early employment period appear to remain stable. Moreover, increased investments in the form of time and energy make it increasingly difficult for employees to leave their jobs voluntarily. The relative stability of commitment levels along with increased difficulties in leaving the organization weaken the relation between age and OC in the mid and late career stages.

Previous studies reported a positive relationship between an employee's age and organizational tenure and their level of commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1993; Buchanan, 1974). Meyer et al. (1993) found a positive relationship between commitment and extra role behavior. Similarly, O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) admit organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) as a relevant outcome of organizational commitment. Consequently,

age and organizational tenure influence the executives' performance on OCB scale either by increasing the organizational commitment or by dominated motives of different stages of careers.

### Limitations

The first limitation of the study was related to measurement of *Career* stage. In this study career stage was measured by indirect method (age and organizational tenure). The study was conducted only on front level managers; middle and top level executives were not included in the sample. Dependency on the single rating sources either self or superior may be another imperfection of the study.

### Conclusion

In general, the present research supported the notion that older and long term tenured executives demonstrate high level of OCB than their younger and short term tenured counterparts.

### References

- Allen, N. J., & Smith, J. (1987). An investigation of extra-role behaviors within organizations. *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Psychological Association*, pp. 81-89.
- Allen, N., Meyer, J. (1993). Organizational commitment: evidence of career stage effects? *Journal of Business Research*, 26, 49-61.
- Bedeian, A. G., Pizzolatto, A. B., Long R. G. & Griffeth. R. W. (1991). The Measurement and Conceptualization of Career Stages. *Journal of Career Development* 17, 153-166. DOI: 10.1177/089484539101700301
- Borman, W. C., & Motowidlo, S. J. (1993). Expanding the criterion domain to include elements of contextual performance. In N.Schmitt & W.C. Borman (Eds.), *Personnel selection in organizations* (pp.71-98). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Buchanan, B., II. (1974). Building organizational commitment: The socialization of managers in work organizations. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 19, 533-546.
- Chen, X-P., Hun, C. & Segoe, D.J. (1998). The Role of Organizational Citizenship Behavior in Turnover: Conceptualization and Preliminary Tests of Key Hypotheses. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83, 922-931.
- Cohen, A. (1993). Age and tenure in relation to organizational commitment: A meta-analysis. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 14, 143-159
- Cron, W. L. (1984). Industrial salesperson development: A career stages perspective. *The Journal of Marketing*, 48, 41-52.
- Cron, W. L. & Slocum, J. W. Jr. (1986). The Influence of career stages on salespeople's job attitudes, work perceptions and performance. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 23, 119-129.
- Doering, M., Rhodes S.R. & Schuster, M. (1993). *The aging worker*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage
- Gould, S. (1979). Age, job complexity, satisfaction, and performance. *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 14, 209-223.
- Gould, S., & Hawkins, B. (1978). Organizational career stage as a moderator of the satisfaction-performance relationship. *Academy of Management Journal*, 21, 434-450.
- Greenhaus, J. H. (1987). *Career management*. Hinsdale, IL: Dryden.
- Griffin, R. G. (2003). Cross-generational perceptions of psychological sense of community in the workplace and their impact on affective commitment. Published dissertation, Case Western Reserve University. DAI-A 63/10, p. 3747.
- Isabella, L. A. (1988). The effect of career stage on the meaning of key organizational events. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 9, 345-358.
- Jans, N. A. (1989). Organizational commitment, career factors and career/life stage. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 10, 247-266.
- Kanungo, R. N. & Conger, J. A. (1993). Promoting altruism as a corporate goal. *Academy of Management Executive*, 7, 37-48.
- Kegan, R. (1982). *The Evolving Self: Problem and Process in Human Adult Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Kuehn, K. W., & Al-Busaidi, Y. (2002). Citizenship behavior in a non-western context: an examination of the role of satisfaction, commitment and job characteristics on self-reported OCB. *International Journal of Conflict Management, 12*, 107.
- LePine, J. A., Erez, A., & Johnson, D. E. (2002). A Meta-Analysis of the Dimensionality of Organizational Citizenship Behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87*, 52-65.
- Levinson, D.J. (1986). A conception of adult development. *American Psychologist, 41*, 3-13.
- Levinson, D. J., Darrow, C. N., Klein, E. B., Levinson, M. H., & McKee, B. (1978). *The seasons in a man's life*. New York: Knopf.
- Meyer, J. P. Allen, N. J. Smith, C. A. (1993). Commitment to Organizations and Occupations: Extension and Test of a Three-Component Conceptualization. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 78*, 538-552.
- Meyer, P. J., & Allen, J. N. (1991). A three-component conceptualization of organizational commitment. *Human Resource Management Review, 1*, 61-89.
- Morrison, E.W.(1994). Role definitions and organizational citizenship behavior: The importance of the employee's perspective. *Academy of Management Journal, 37*, 1543-1567.
- Morrison, E. W. R. (1994). Definition and organizational citizenship behavior: the importance of the employee's perspective. *Academy of Management Journal, 37*, 1543-1567. Retrieved May 20, 2009, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/256798>.
- Morrison, W.E. (1993). Toward an understanding of employee role definition and their implications for organizational citizenship behavior. *Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management*.
- Morrison, E.W. (1993). Toward an understanding of employee role definitions and their implications for organizational citizenship behavior. *Academy of Management Best Paper Proceedings*.
- Morrow, P. C., & McElroy, J. C. (1987). Work commitment and job satisfaction over three career stages. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 30*, 330-346.
- Mount, M. K. (1984). Managerial career stage and facets of job satisfaction. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 24*, 348-354.
- Mowday, R. T., Porter, L. M., & Steers, R. M. (1982). *Employee-organizational linkage*. New York: Academic
- O'Reilly, C. A. & Chatman, J. (1986). Organizational commitment and psychological attachment: The effects of compliance, identification, and internalization on prosocial behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 71*, 492-499
- Organ, D. W & Ryan, K. (1995). A Meta-Analytic Review of Attitudinal and Dispositional Predictors of Organizational Citizenship Behavior. *Personnel Psychology, 48*, 775-802.
- Organ, D. W. (1988) *Organizational Citizenship Behavior: The Good Soldier Syndrome*, Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
- Ornstein, S., Cron, W. L., & Slocum, J. W., Jr. (1989). Life stage versus career stage: A comparative test of the theories of Levinson and Super. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 10*, 117-133.
- Podsakoff, P. M., Mackenzie, S. B., Paine, B. J. and Bacharach, D. J. (2000). Organizational citizenship behaviors: a critical review of the theoretical and empirical literature and suggestions for future research, *Journal of Management, 26*, 513-63.
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Bommer, W.H. (1996). Transformational leader behaviors and substitutes for leadership as determinants of employee satisfaction, commitment, trust, and organizational citizenship behaviors. *Journal of Management, 22*, 259-298.
- Podsakoff, P.M., Mackenzie, S.B., Moorman, R.H and Fetter, R. (1990) Transformational leader behaviors and their effects on trust, satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviors. *Leadership Quarterly, 1*, 107-142.
- Slocum, J., & Cron, W. (1985). Job attitudes and performance during three career stages. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 26*, 126-145.
- Smart, R. M. (1998). Career stages in Australian professional women: A test of Super's model. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 52*, 379-395.

- Smith, C.A., Organ, D.W., & Near, J. P. (1983). Organizational citizenship behavior: Its nature and antecedents. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 68*, 653-663.
- Stumpf, S. A., & Rabinowitz, S. (1981). Career stage as a moderator of performance relationships with facets of job satisfaction and role perceptions. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 18*, 202-218.
- Super, D. E. (1957). *The Psychology of Careers*. New York: Harper.
- Super, D. E. (1980). A life-span, life-space approach to career development. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 16*, 282-298.
- Super, D. E. (1984). Career and life development. In D. Brown and L. Brooks (Eds.), *Career choice and development* (pp. 192-234). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Super, D., Robin, S. Z., & Albert, S. T. (1981). *Career Development Inventory: Adult Form I*. New York: Teacher's College, Columbia University.
- Van Dyne, L., Graham, J. G., & Dienesch, R. M. (1994). Organizational citizenship behavior: Construct redefinition, operationalization, and validation. *Academy of Management Journal, 37*, 765-802. .
- Williams, L. J., & Anderson, S. E. (1991). Job satisfaction and organizational commitment as predictors of organizational citizenship and in-role behaviors. *Journal of Management, 17*, 601-617.

Received: January 03, 2010  
 Revision received: March 03, 2010  
 Accepted: May 11, 2010

**Akhilendra K. Singh**, PhD, Lecturer, Department of Psychology (P.G. Diploma in Counseling and Psychotherapy), Banaras Hindu University, (South Campus) Varanasi-221 005, Email-akhilendra\_bhu@yahoo.com,

**A. P. Singh**, PhD, Professor, Department of Psychology, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi-221 005, Email- aps\_bhu@yahoo.co.in

## 32nd ISPA International Conference

Dublin Ireland

20 – 24 July 2010

**School Psychology: Making life better for all children**

### Programme Sub themes

- Academic Achievement
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Working Together

#### Organisers:

Psychological Society of Ireland  
 Northern Ireland Branch  
 British Psychological Society  
 Educational psychologists on the  
 Island of Ireland

